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DORA WORDSWORTH: HER BOOK.

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I.

IF one could have been a literary visitor to Wordsworth's home at Rydal Mount, and of sufficient intimacy with the family, there would have been at least a glimpse of Dora Wordsworth's book. The poet's daughter, christened Dorothy after her aunt, but universally called Dora to avoid confusion, grew up in those 'sentimental emotional days of L. E. L. and of Keepsakes and Mrs. Hemans,' when, to paraphrase the rest of Lady Ritchie's remark, albums were paramount and album-writers in demand. Dora shared the custom of keeping an album; as time passed and the entries accumulated it became a treasure highly valued. At first the small book, nearly square, appeared in its natural binding of green tooled morocco; as a book-plate it had the name 'Dora Wordsworth' neatly written in decorative fashion, with a pen sketch as of heraldic arms. Later it was put by Dora into a blue silk cover with a brown design of flowers; and later still this was inserted in a black silk case with a blue lining, the whole carefully tied both ways with silk tapes. These details are not the result of invention. The album is extant, though the silk case is a little faded, the lining somewhat worn, and the ink upon its pages growing faint.

The story of the album brings up several pictures worth recalling. There are in it about sixty contributions, sometimes elaborate, with dates running over a period of twenty years. Some of the names are of prominence, but rather than turning immediately to them I think the most useful arrangement will be to sketch the progress of the book continuously. The beginning is in the summer of 1830, when Wordsworth was sixty and Dora twenty-six. In that year, to name a dozen of those who contributed at

one time or another, Felicia Hemans was thirty-seven, Leigh Hunt forty-six, Thomas Moore fifty-one, Landor and Charles Lamb fifty-five, Southey fifty-six, Coleridge fifty-eight, Walter Scott fifty-nine, and Crabbe seventy-six. Matthew Arnold was then a boy of eight, Tennyson twenty-one, Sara Coleridge twenty-eight. At the date of the last entry, made by Sara Coleridge in 1850, the only survivors of the dozen mentioned were Moore, Landor, Leigh Hunt, Arnold, Tennyson, and herself. The entries go on, therefore, some time after Dora's death in 1847, and end a few months after the death of Wordsworth.

The twenty years so covered is not the period of greatest interest in the study of Wordsworth as a poet. His best work, we are often told, was over. It was not his fortune to leave the world at the flood-time of his inspiration, and in this period he lived on while the tide was followed, as Sir Walter Raleigh put it, 'by a long and wandering ebb.' But though he did not have, to recommend him to posterity, either the gesture of a sudden end or an old age gracefully admitted, we need not overlook the hard fight of a man who was too stubborn to relinquish the restless craving for illumination. Not altogether ignorant of his loss of vision—

‘of the light  
Full early lost, and fruitlessly deplored’

—he sought in Dora a daughter to be more than his Antigone. He tried most strenuously to recapture, in her companionship, the eyes and ears which Dorothy had given to him thirty and more years before. It is somewhat pathetic to see how many of the same tours, how many of the same experiments, were repeated despite the years between. That Dora could not do for him what Dorothy had done was not her fault. Neither she nor Wordsworth could recall his vanished insight.

In picturing Dora before the time at which our scene opens, we do not need to look back upon anything but a natural girlhood. The various sketches in the poems do not give much to go upon; a letter of Dorothy Wordsworth, dated April 4, 1816, when Dora was eleven, is more definite.

‘She is lively, affectionate, and quick in faculties; but is often wayward and has fits of obstinacy with pride. Of vanity she has little or none, and is utterly free from envy. She is a fine-looking girl, but at times her face is very plain, at other times it

is even beautiful. She is rather stout and tall, but neither in the extreme, holds her head up well, has a broad chest, and good shoulders, but walks and runs most awkwardly. . . .

From that 'leggy' stage she developed into a tall, graceful, and very pleasant-faced young woman with light-brown hair, delicate rather than robust appearance, with an expression and smile of singular sweetness.

When Dora was seventeen an incident occurred which had much bearing on her future life. A young married couple, Mr. and Mrs. Quillinan, came to live near Rydal Mount, and became very friendly with the Wordsworths. Edward Quillinan was born in Oporto in 1791; after schooling in England he returned to Portugal in 1807, and joined the army. While only nineteen he had three duels on his hands as the result of verses in which he had rashly caricatured some of the officers of his own regiment; but he came successfully out of these early quarrels and, in 1817, married Jemima Brydges. After a period in Ireland, he was quartered at Penrith in 1820-21; and having long been an enthusiastic admirer of Wordsworth, at this time met him personally. In 1821 he left the service, and settled in the Vale of Rydal, in a house—Ivy Cottage, just below Rydal Mount—taken for him by Wordsworth. It was for the latter's neighbourhood, 'even more than for the beauty of the district,' that Quillinan became a resident at the Lakes. Shortly after his arrival he made an excursion with the poet to Fountains Abbey and other parts of Yorkshire.

During the next year a tragic misfortune happened to the newcomers. Mrs. Quillinan had been ill for some time after the birth of her second daughter; while she was convalescent her dressing-gown caught fire, and she was burned severely. She died the next day in Ivy Cottage. Dorothy Wordsworth, who had been very kind to the young couple, was present at the last, and lent whatever aid was possible; but the tragedy, in its suddenness and agony, was a great shock to all, and a tremendous grief to Quillinan. Dora became, for a time, as a mother to the two little girls, Jemima and Rotha—the latter Wordsworth's god-child; then Quillinan took his children to Lee Priory, in Kent, and himself went wandering upon the Continent. On his return he stayed with his brother-in-law at Lee Priory, and generally lived there or at his own house in Bryanston Street till 1832. [■]

The Wordsworths, however, did not allow the widower to be forsaken by his friends. They planned a tour in Belgium and

Holland for the summer of 1823, and in May Mrs. Wordsworth wrote, from their halting-place in Cambridge, that she, Wordsworth, and Dora hoped to stay some days with him *en route*. The visit was a joy to Quillinan, and it was repeated in June, when the Wordsworths returned from the Continent. Contact was fairly regular from then on, and indeed before very long Quillinan began to play his part in cheering up the Wordsworth family. They were entering one of the happily infrequent periods of depression, from which the family alone had difficulty in raising itself. Dora, whose health gave them cause for worry, was critically ill in 1826 ; and the death of Sir George Beaumont early in 1827—the first gap in the friends of Wordsworth's middle life—likewise weighed down the group at Rydal Mount. The strain of correcting the poems for the 1827 edition fell upon a household of tired nerves ; the labour fell upon the women as well as upon Wordsworth, and added to their task of ministering to a man in low spirits.

Of the first of these causes for depression, we see something in a letter from Mrs. Wordsworth to John Kenyon, dated August 18, 1827.

' Dora, whom you so kindly inquire after, is no longer an invalid, she is become as strong as I ever remember her to have been, but this happy state is only to be depended upon so long as the beautiful weather lasts. She is a complete *air* gauge. As soon as damp is felt, the trouble in her throat returns ; something connected with the trachea, that causes a cough and other inconveniences. To keep this enemy aloof, she is not to winter in our weeping climate ; therefore before the next rainy season sets in, perhaps in a very few weeks, she with myself for her attendant mean to quit our pleasant home and friends ; but we mean to go to others and make ourselves as joyous as we can. . . . '

The letter is not over-cheerful, but it contains an indication of better news. Mrs. Wordsworth goes on to mention a picnic, and intimates that Quillinan was present and a guest at Rydal for some days. It begins to appear that he was interested in Dora. Indeed, in 1828 he broached the question of marriage to her father ; and Wordsworth, who had previously and firmly refused the advances of a cousin, listened this time with more favour. He would not commit himself to a date, but still he listened, and I think Dora was happy, in her shy way, to see how things were going. In May of the same year Wordsworth and Dora spent some time with Quillinan in London, and then (Wordsworth

borrowing for the occasion a carpet-bag from Crabb Robinson) set off for a tour with Coleridge through Belgium and up the Rhine. The sentimental may read what they will into the last stanzas of the poem *In Bruges Town is Many a Street*, and may even say that Dora's tear was not uncompounded with some thoughts of Quillinan, mingled, perhaps, with a curious sorrow for the 'might-have-been'; in any case, the pair knew each other's minds by this time. The scanty evidence at hand shows little of meetings that, in probability, were frequent; but we know that in 1829 Quillinan was at Rydal Mount, for he dates some verses there; and a letter to him from Dora on November 14, in playful, pretty mood, indicates that it is not the first in which she acknowledged herself his lover. A phrase of Dorothy Wordsworth's about this time may have some bearing; it describes Dora 'as lively as a lark.'

This brings us to the year 1830, and the start of the album. In taking the signatures in order, we lose sight of Edward Quillinan for the time being.

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The summer of 1830 was a season of unusual social gaiety at Rydal Mount. Discontent seems to have passed away from the family. Dorothy Wordsworth rallied from her mysterious nervous ailment; and Dora, though she returned unwell from a visit to Moresby, grew better as the summer went on. Whenever she was in her sprightly mood, the family was cheerful. Throughout our narrative Dora forms, in another sense of Mrs. Wordsworth's phrase, a complete air-gauge for Rydal. At the time of her return the general liveliness was aided by the presence of various congenial guests; and of those who were there and who paid compliments to Wordsworth, Mrs. Hemans is particularly worthy of remembrance for choosing an unusual phrase.

Mrs. Hemans, the incurably romantic and delightfully pretty idol of her day, appeared at Rydal Mount towards the end of June. The portrait in the National Portrait Gallery, and the miniature as frontispiece to Lady Ritchie's 'Blackstick Papers,' give indication of a charming face surrounded by dark glossy curls; bright eyes, a good complexion, lips that could either laugh or pout; 'with an air,' says Rossetti, 'of amiability and sprightly gentleness, and of confiding candour which, while none the less perfectly womanly, might also be termed childlike in its limpid depth....' There are many little tributes from contemporary pens. 'I might describe her for ever,' said Miss Jewsbury, 'and

never should I succeed in portraying Egeria! She was a Muse, a Grace, a variable child, a dependent woman, the Italy of human beings. . . .’ The phrase, the ‘idol of her day,’ is not exaggerated. ‘Editors wrote by every post for contributions from her pen, and admirers trod on each other’s heels, and packets of poetry arrived by every mail; also there came messages and compliments from America, where, if she would have consented to settle down, Felicia was offered a definite competence by a publishing firm.’ The words are Lady Ritchie’s, who reminds us that ‘ladies held their own then, not by main force, but by divinest right.’ Felicia Hemans nestled in the sentimental bosom of the age just preceding the accession of Victoria; she spontaneously rushed to verse as a discharge for tearful thoughts that had no very profound origin; and though she had at least two gifts, a sense of music and a sense of colour, I suppose oblivion in due course will claim her poems.

The phrase to which we referred above occurs in a letter she wrote from Rydal Mount, dated June 22, 1830. After describing her nervousness when the visit was in prospect, she goes on :

‘I was driven to a lovely cottage-like building, almost hidden by a profusion of roses and ivy; and a most benignant-looking old man greeted me in the porch—this was Mr. Wordsworth himself; and when I tell you that, having rather a large party of visitors in the house, he led me to a room apart from them, and brought in his family by degrees, I am sure that little trait will give you an idea of considerate kindness which you will both like and appreciate. In half an hour I felt myself as much at ease with him as I had been with Sir Walter Scott in half a day. I laughed to find myself saying on the occasion of some little domestic occurrence, “Mr. Wordsworth, how *could* you be so giddy ?” ’

No stranger compliment was ever paid to Wordsworth. The somewhat stern and serious old man we usually picture had received from his contemporaries many a shrewd knock, many a vapid phrase, and many fulsome adulations; but I think no friend or enemy had ever called him ‘giddy’—not at least at sixty, when his shell was set. We form a curious picture of the incident: Loughrigg Tarn, that little laughing face of water, looks up at the Langdale Pikes, and says, ‘Oh Langdale Pikes, how *could* you be so giddy ?’ With all our modern talk of Wordsworth’s later rigidness and of his lack of humour, the phrase demands attention. It startles our set notions, as, we imagine, it startled Wordsworth. More observations follow in the same letter.

'He has, undeniably, a lurking love of mischief, and would not, I think, be half so safely entrusted with the tied-up bag of winds as Mr. —— insisted that Dr. Channing might be. There is almost a patriarchal simplicity, and an absence of all pretension, about him, which I know you would like ; all is free,—unstudied,—“The river winding at its own sweet will.” In his manner and conversation there is more of impulse than I had expected, but in other respects I see much that I should look for in the poet of meditative life ; frequently his head droops, and his eyes half close, and he seems buried in great depths of thought. I have passed a delightful morning to-day, in walking with him about his own richly shaded grounds, and hearing him speak of the old English writers, particularly Spenser, whom he loves, as he himself puts it, for his “earnestness and devotedness.”'

The latter part of the picture is more familiar to us ; but for the ‘lurking love of mischief’ and the conversational playfulness which could call forth the feminine epithet, we are grateful to Mrs. Hemans. It was not the least of many tributes to her beauty. There was, however, a slight reaction in his manner after a few days. Her impulsiveness and her romanticism called forth a reproof. Scott, though he was fond of Mrs. Hemans and paid her several sincere compliments—taking trouble to aid the production of one of her plays—noted that she was ‘somewhat too poetical for my taste ; too many flowers and too little fruit.’ But Scott said nothing to ‘improve’ her. Wordsworth took his duties as a host more seriously. He was aware that Mrs. Hemans had been a precocious child, in the habit, at the age of six, of reading Shakespeare while seated in the branches of an apple-tree ; and that, being clever and quick-witted, she had run into the dangerous habit of being a poetess rather than a woman. ‘Her education,’ says the Fenwick note in which Wordsworth, much later, dictates the improving incident, ‘had been most unfortunate. She was totally ignorant of housewifery, and could as easily have managed the spear of Minerva as her needle. It was from observing these deficiencies that, one day while she was under my roof, I *purposely* directed her attention to household economy, and told her I had purchased *Scales* which I intended to present to a young lady as a wedding present ; pointed out their utility (for her especial benefit) and said that no ménage ought to be without them. Mrs. Hemans, not in the least suspecting my drift, reported this saying, in a letter to a friend at the time, as a proof of my simplicity.’

It is hardly fair to break the quotation at this spot, for Words-

worth goes on to state honestly his 'affection for her amiable qualities,' and that 'there was much sympathy between us.' I have no wish to bring the 'Scales' incident into undue prominence. It was, though characteristic, on the whole quite unimportant. It clung for fifteen years in Wordsworth's memory, perhaps as a surprising failure, but did not obliterate the recollection of a pleasant visit. As for Mrs. Hemans, after her weeks at Rydal Mount she moved into a neighbouring cottage, Dove Nest, so as to prolong her stay at the Lakes. Her children there assembled, she did not leave for Wales until the middle of August. Her feelings about Rydal Mount were expressed by giving to Dora the little green album, and by writing in a small and pinny hand upon the first page :

*'To Rydal Mount.'*

'Home of kind Voices and of loving eyes,  
And Flowers, and Song!—thy Voices from the Earth  
Must pass away, with all their Melodies,  
And answering tones of Sadness or of Mirth;  
Thy fond looks vanish, and thy treasured flowers  
Yield up their spirits unto changeful hours.'

'Not so thy Song! that like a glorious River,  
With gentle Music in its deepest flow,  
Freely and brightly winding on for ever,  
While Thou art laid amidst thy Roses low,  
Shall pour forth Gladness, and sweet Influence bear  
Thro' blessed Homes like these—tho' none so fair.'

*'Rydal Mount,*  
*'June, 1830.'*

*'FELICIA HEMANS.'*

The sight of a happy family bore a reflex wave of sadness over Mrs. Hemans. The incompatible Captain Hemans had at that time stayed away for twelve years, and showed no signs of returning. Whatever faults and inabilities Mrs. Hemans had, she lived courageously and well through a very trying life, and we may forgive her for being somewhat sentimental. She died five years after her visit to Rydal Mount; and Wordsworth, in 1836, answered her stanzas with sorrow :

'For her who ere her summer faded  
Has sunk into a breathless sleep.'

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Mrs. Hemans was still staying with her children at the Lakes when William Rowan Hamilton and his sister Eliza came to spend

three weeks with the Wordsworths. Hamilton's first visit to Wordsworth had been in 1827, when he was twenty-two, but even then a full Professor of Astronomy. His was a very brilliant and somewhat susceptible youth; Wordsworth had liked him much, and, with a good deal of sympathy, helped the boy over the despondency of an unsuccessful love affair. It was due to Hamilton's suggestion that Wordsworth visited Ireland in 1829; and Eliza describes an incident of that tour in pretty fashion. Wordsworth stayed at the Observatory, Dunsink; and, Hamilton having challenged the poet's treatment of science, Wordsworth proceeded to read long passages of *The Excursion* aloud in the drawing-room. The girls, Eliza and her sister, came in modestly, not daring to interrupt. 'I felt,' says Eliza, 'a tear gathering in my eye as I looked at him, and at that moment, I cannot exactly define why, he seemed to me *sublime*. . . .' Hamilton had prepared his sisters carefully beforehand by impressing upon them the greatness of his friend. There is a boyish egotistical exultation about a letter from him to Eliza during his first visit to the Lakes. Wordsworth had walked with him; 'he and I were taking a *midnight walk* together for a long, long time, *without any companion* except the stars and our own burning thoughts and words.' The italics are his own,

Later on Hamilton paid more attention to the stars, and less to his own 'burning thoughts and words'; but at this time both he and his sister were fond of versification. Wordsworth had given them advice, eminently sensible and generally depreciatory, and they were both excited at the thought of seeing him again in 1830. They met Mrs. Hemans, whom afterwards they grew to know more intimately in Ireland; and they wrote enthusiastically in Dora's album.

Hamilton visited Wordsworth in 1838, and again in the summer of 1844. During this last stay they went for a walk with Professor Butler and other friends to Loughrigg Tarn, a place of many memories for Wordsworth, then seventy-four. Knight quotes Woodward's 'Memoir of Archer Butler' for an account of the day.

'The splendour of a July noon surrounded us and lit up the landscape, with the Langdale Pikes soaring above, and the bright tarn shining beneath; and when the poet's eyes were satisfied with their feast on the beauties familiar to them, they sought relief in the search, to them a happy vital habit, for new beauty in the flower-enamelled turf at his feet. There his attention was arrested

by a fair smooth stone, of the size of an ostrich's egg, seeming to imbed at its centre, and at the same time to display, a dark star-shaped fossil of most distinct outline. Upon closer examination this proved to be the shadow of a daisy projected upon it with extraordinary precision by the intense light of an almost vertical sun. The poet drew the attention of the rest of the party to the minute but beautiful phenomenon, and gave expression at the time to thoughts suggested by it, which so interested our friend Professor Butler, that he plucked the tiny flower, and, saying that "it should be not only the theme but the memorial of the thought they had heard," bestowed it somewhere carefully for preservation.'

The resulting poem, though it would be digression to go farther, was *So fair, so sweet, withal so sensitive.*

At the conclusion of this visit Hamilton wrote a second time in Dora's album. Both entries are recorded at full length in Graves' 'Life of Hamilton,' and there is no need for repetition here. The line in the later contribution in which Hamilton speaks

'Of many an earnest, many a playful talk,'

indicates, with what we have already mentioned, the nature of the visits of the first of the two educators who appear in Dora's book.

The other, Dr. Andrew Bell, was of very different character. Hamilton was a research worker, who is chiefly notable in the history of science for such contributions as the theory of Quaternions. He was an educator in the sense of a lecturer on abstruse and advanced problems. Dr. Bell made no such lasting contributions to the stock of knowledge. He sprang to fame in his own day by the indomitable pursuit of a very simple idea, less original than he supposed; and he is remarkable in history more as a quaint and not altogether enviable person, than for the idea which he thought would revolutionise the practice of teaching—an educator in the sense of a reformer of elementary schools, and interesting by virtue of remarkable strength of purpose.

In Professor Meiklejohn's biography the story is engagingly told. Andrew Bell was born in St. Andrews in 1753, his father a wig-maker with an appetite and mouth 'of remarkable and well-known capacity.' These qualities Bell inherited, together with a keen, strong mind. He achieved considerable success at the University. Seeing no prospect of adequate pay in St. Andrews, he went to Virginia, and after a stay there, in which he dabbled in tobacco and the exchange as well as teaching, brought two

pupils back with him to London. Finding them of expensive tastes, he resigned their charge and returned by road to Scotland. He kept a journal *en route*; mentions that at Grantham he 'supped at the Angel with an Israelite'; that he was continually losing things upon the way—'on the first day my penknife, on the second a handkerchief, on the third a nightcap, on the fourth my glass.' When he reached Scotland he objected, like Dr. Johnson, to the smells. At Fallowden he had good green tea at breakfast, which cost sixpence; 'at Greenlaw it was eightpence.' Finally, he 'arrived in the dark at St. Andrews, and was not known by mamma.'

So ended the first stage of his adventures. His stay in St. Andrews was not altogether devoid of excitement. He was made a Doctor by his university, and had a duel with an English student, which ended amusingly, because Bell was short-sighted and fired into the seconds by mistake. But his hot temper was always reconciled by thoughts of food, and in his chronicle there is more of feasts than quarrels. Typical is the account of a notable Christmas spread, with some remarks on heavy eating and profound joy at 'Three wines: bravo!' The period was one of hard work as well as pleasure. Bell rose habitually at four, and when his London pupils came north for metaphysics he tried to make them start their days at five. But there seemed no more real prospects of advancement at St. Andrews than he had seen before; so, in 1787, we see the Doctor sailing for India with £128 10s. in pocket.

His aim in India had been Calcutta, but on the way he seized the opportunity of taking charge of a Military Male Orphan Asylum at Madras. There he was indefatigable, both in and out of the asylum. Between August and October of the year of his arrival he obtained, besides his definite charge, one chaplainship, three deputy-chaplainships, and delivered as well a course of public lectures. These became the fashionable rage of the ladies of Madras; as some one wrote about the course, 'the ladies are determined to encounter every inconvenience for fashion's sake.' Bell was completely happy. Within a year and a half he held eight sinecures; was everywhere at once; and when he returned, in 1796, his balance put his previous account to shame. It was £25,935 16s. 5d.

By no means was this all. In India he had found his one idea; and he returned prepared to tackle and conquer England by means of his 'Report on the Madras Asylum.' The scheme he had in mind was a pupil-teacher, or mutual-tuition, system which he hoped to

introduce in every school from Land's End to John o' Groats. The Report, he was convinced, would alter and ameliorate all troubles of elementary instruction ; and, about 1797, he writes to the printer : ' You will mark me for an enthusiast ; but if you and I live a thousand years, we shall see this system of education spread over the world.' Copies of the Report were sent to all the peers of the realm, and Bell travelled up and down the country-side inspecting, urging changes, exhorting everybody to adhere and trust to the new panacea.

As an investment, he bought a house and land at Dumfries. His friends suspected some ulterior motive. ' It is,' wrote one, ' the general opinion of all my female friends, that you could only hire so dear a house, and keep a carriage, with a view to fascinate some coy damsel.' As a matter of fact, the susceptible Doctor was amenable to these suggestions. He had long had the expressed desire for what he thought ' the only solid comfort of life—a union with an amiable and sweet partner.' He therefore married, at the age of forty-seven, a Miss Agnes Barclay. It was an unfortunate experiment. They separated after six years of misalliance. The Doctor's ' somewhat combustible disposition,' says Meiklejohn, may have been partly to blame ; but the misogynistical De Quincey blames the lady. ' This legal separation,' says the author, in a note to ' Reminiscences of the Lake Poets,' ' did not prevent the lady from presenting the unhappy doctor with everlasting letters, indorsed outside with records of her enmity and spite. Sometimes she addressed her epistles thus : " To that supreme of rogues, who looks like the hangdog that he is, Doctor (such a Doctor !) Andrew Bell." Or, again : " To the ape of apes, and the knave of knaves, who is recorded to have once paid a debt, but a small one you may be sure it was that he selected for this wonderful experiment—in fact, it was 4½d. Had it been the other side of 6d. he must have died before he could have achieved so dreadful a sacrifice." Many others, most ingeniously varied in the style of abuse, I have heard rehearsed by Coleridge, Southey, Lloyd, etc. ; and one, in particular, addressed to the Doctor, when spending the summer in the cottage of Robert Newton, an old soldier, in Grasmere, presented on the back two separate adjurations, one specially addressed to Robert himself, pathetically urging him to look sharply after the rent of his lodgings ; and the other more generally addressed to the unfortunate person as yet undisclosed to the British public (and in this case turning out to be myself), who

might be incautious enough to pay the postage at Ambleside. "Don't grant him an hour's credit," she urged upon the person unknown, "if I had any regard to my family." "*Cash down*," she wrote, twice over. Why the Doctor submitted to these annoyances, nobody knew. Some said it was mere indolence; but others held it to be a cunning compromise with her inexorable malice. The letters were certainly open to the "public" eye; but meantime the "public" was a very narrow one; the clerks in the post office had little time for digesting such amenities of conjugal affection, and the chance bearer of the letters to the Doctor would naturally solve the mystery by supposing an *extra* portion of madness in the writer, rather than an *extra* portion of knavery in the reverend receiver.'

The unhappy experiment over, Bell remained for the rest of his life wedded to his System. As was said once of King John, with 'wonderful energy and hot haste' he travelled and laboured to convince all he met. There was no limit to his versatility and range of argument, though in the latter a friend advised him not to talk so loud. He held various livings and advertised the System in all. 'Benefit societies, schools, friendly meetings, clubs, visiting from house to house, advising with farmers,—nothing came amiss to him; his large, fiery, friendly nature had an infection in it which few could resist.' He redoubled all earlier efforts, became a fanatic in the cause. 'He could think of nothing else; he spoke of nothing else; he wrote about nothing else. He was devoured by this single aim; he had become in every respect a one-ideaed man. Everything, both external and internal—every trait in the character or minds of other men—was submitted to the standard of the *System* and approved or condemned by that.' He called it the Novum Organum of education. He preached about it without end. At Hereford he delivered a sermon after keeping an amanuensis busy night and day copying his verbose and involved sentences. He preached for an hour, then took off his spectacles to wipe them. The congregation, thinking he had done, rose up to leave. Instantly the Doctor shouted 'God bless my soul!' clapped his spectacles back on, and began again.

He became a little trying to his friends. Many were convinced. Mr. Justice Park wrote that Bell's 'plan is one of the most stupendous engines that have ever been wielded, since the days of our Saviour and His apostles, for the advancement of God's true religion upon earth.' Southey admired him heartily, calling the

System 'the most important invention for the diffusion of knowledge that has ever been made since printing was discovered.' Southey also named Bell 'the best of all good men,' and Coleridge called him a great man to his face. Bell was not dismayed. He urged the System upon Wordsworth, and the latter was enthusiastic for a time. In a note to *The Excursion* (ix. 299), where the Wanderer speaks of the State 'binding herself by statute to secure' the rudiments of letters 'for all the children whom her soil maintains,' Wordsworth says :

'The discovery of Dr. Bell affords marvellous facilities for carrying this into effect; and it is impossible to overrate the benefit which might accrue to humanity from the universal application of this simple engine under an enlightened and conscientious government.'

Later this enthusiasm cooled, and we have the reaction :

'Even as a course of tuition, I have strong objections to infant schools, and in no small degree to the Madras System also.'

But for the moment, at any rate, Wordsworth was talked over; and the kindly hearted Dorothy was a willing victim when Bell asked for her aid. He wrote abominably, and conferred with her as to how the 'Report' might be improved. She laboured, studied, remodelled, and even rewrote the whole; but in the end it came to nothing. The Doctor had a villainous habit of getting people to do work for him and then discarding it; and he threw Dorothy's manuscript aside for its lack of ponderosity.

In 1830 Bell was a cantankerous old man of seventy-seven. He then fixed his residence at Cheltenham, and never again left it. He had severe troubles of his own. His voice and throat were affected; and his breathing, through slow hardening of the windpipe, was impeded. But he still clung desperately to his one idea. He was very anxious about his works, both the existing and the proposed posthumous editions. Among other plans he formed one of a complete edition of everything he had written, to be edited by Southey and Wordsworth. Mrs. Wordsworth went to Cheltenham to see him about this scheme. She found the Doctor both ill and irritable; full of tremulous anxiety about the disposal of his property and his 'ideas'; and she did not have an easy or an altogether pleasant visit. It has called for mention here, however, because (I judge) she took with her to Cheltenham the little green album: In it there is written :

'If you and I live a thousand years, we shall see this System  
over the world.  
A. BELL.'

The penmanship is shaky and very feeble, the entry a thin but determined recapitulation of the enthusiastic boast made to the printer more than thirty years before. What adds, if you like, a tinge of pathos is that the 'Madras System' is so thoroughly dead, if one may use the phrase, that it is only brought to memory by the character of its proposer.

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Southey's entry in the album follows immediately after that of Andrew Bell, and is as follows :

'This is a little Book ; the less,  
The better it must be.  
(Dear Dora, what I think of it,  
I fairly say to thee.)  
A smaller, or a prettier Book,  
I would not wish to see . . .  
I only wish it had been full  
Before it came to me.'

'ROBERT SOUTHEY.'

'Cat's Eden, 1 Oct. 1830.'

Cat's Eden, where the verses were signed, I take to be Southey's study. His love of the room and his industry there are proverbial. 'Imagine me,' he wrote, 'in this great study of mine from breakfast till dinner, from dinner till tea, and from tea till supper, in my old black coat, my corduroys alternately with the long worsted pantaloons and gaiters in one, and the green shade, and sitting at my desk, and you have my picture and my history.' But he was not always alone at his work. He was very fond of cats and kittens, and it may have been Rumpel, as a kitten, who assisted him to compose the entry for Dora. Rumpel was a great favourite : unfortunately he died about 1834. 'Alas, Grosvenor,' mourns Southey in a letter, 'this day poor old Rumpel was found dead, after as long and happy a life as a cat could wish for, if cats form wishes on that subject. His full title was :— "The Most Noble the Archduke Rumpelstiltzchen, Earl Tomlemagne, Baron Raticide, Waowhler, and Skeratch." There should be a court mourning in Catland. . . . As we have no catacombs here, he is to be decently interred in the orchard, and cat-mint planted on his grave.'

Since we have mentioned Cat's Eden, the next entry of interest is fittingly that of Maria Jane Jewsbury. The intervening contributions are a pen sketch after Rembrandt by M. Dickinson, and a poem, *The Nun*, by Edward Northcoat Archer. Then follows *The Sleeping Forest-Child*, by Miss Jewsbury, dated November 5, 1830; and though the poem need not be emphasised, its author tried to make Rydal Mount not exactly Cat's Eden, but still a hunting-ground for adventurous Tomlemagnes. She gave to Wordsworth some goldfish, and a pair of doves to Dora. Both gifts are noted by Wordsworth in verse. The fish were kept for some time in a bowl in the morning-room, but did not thrive there; they were removed to 'Dora's Field'; and in the Fenwick note to *Liberty* Wordsworth adds some details. 'One of them being all but dead, they were taken to the pool under the old pollard oak. The apparently dying one lay on its side, unable to move. I used to watch it, and about the tenth day it began to right itself, and in a few days more was able to swim about with its companions. For many months they continued to prosper in this new place of abode, but one night, by an unusually great flood, they were swept out of the pool, and perished, to our great regret.'

The doves, more immediate desire of the cats, were in an osier cage, usually hung in a laburnum in the garden glades. Though one died, the other survived for 'many years,' and, as indicated in the note to *The Poet and the Caged Turtledove*, 'it was the habit of the bird to begin cooing and murmuring whenever it heard me making my verses.' But eventually fate overtook it. It 'was killed, to our great sorrow, by a neighbour's cat that got in at the window and dragged it partly out of the cage.' I am not sure whether the cat was Rumpel, come across country to avenge some slight upon his master's books by Wordsworth's careless hands. Southey, though he was good-humoured on the subject, used to lament with a smile that to 'introduce Wordsworth into one's library, is like letting a bear into a tulip garden'; and if Rumpel was all that Southey says about him, Wordsworth must have seemed to the four-legged animal an intruder in Cat's Eden, a 'mere monster' (De Quincey's phrase) who had no interest in Catland, and who was unfriendly to its lazy peace.

Wordsworth's attitude to animals is interesting. He brought his unresting inquiry to bear upon them, willing enough to glean thoughts serious and in the deep sense scientific, but succumbing rarely to the relaxation of playfulness. Canon Rawnsley questioned

some dalesmen on this point. ‘ Wudsworth was no dog-fancier,’ answered one who had been a servant of the poet, ‘ and as for cats, he couldn’t abide them ; and he didn’t care for sheep, or horses, a deal, but if he was fond of onything it was of *li’le ponies*. He was a man of fancies, ye kna. It was a fancy of his. He was fond of *li’le ponies*.’ It is a remark to be remembered later in connection with the pony Naso.

Miss Jewsbury was a friend of some years’ standing. In the *Literary Magnet* for 1826 she had published a poem on *The Poet’s Home*, descriptive of Rydal Mount. This part refers to Dora and her father :

‘ Then a second form beyond  
Thine too, by another bond,  
Sportive, tender, graceful, wild,  
Scarcely woman, more than child,  
One who doth thy heart entwine  
Like the ever-clinging vine ;  
One to whom thou art a stay,  
As the oak that, scarred and grey,  
Standeth on, and standeth fast,  
Strong and stately to the last.’

It was during that visit, perhaps, that Miss Jewsbury told Wordsworth about the pleasure she once had in looking at a stuffed owl during illness. This suggested the sonnet *While Anna’s peers and early playmates tread*—Anna standing for Miss Jewsbury, as Professor Knight pointed out in a footnote which contains a slight mistake. The poem *Liberty*, in which the goldfish are referred to, was addressed to Miss Jewsbury, but never reached her in print. She married and went to India with her husband before it came out, and there died of cholera.

(To be continued.)

## ASHANTI AT WEMBLEY.

BY STEPHEN GWYNN.

It may seem illogical to have at Wembley a costly exhibit which is not easily accessible : and only privileged persons are admitted to the Ashanti village. But, in the first place, these Africans are here to see as well as to be seen : the big power which has taken charge of their local destiny gives them that opportunity for extended travel which is no novel idea to the African mind : every Mohammedan has the desire for it almost as part of his religion. Since we act on the supposition that our civilisation is superior to that of Ashanti, it is fair to give the Ashantis a chance of learning what it is by observation of the land it comes from. In the second place, opportunity to study the exhibit is accorded to serious students, of whom I was considered to be one. Yet, though I had been reading about West Africa for thirty years and writing about what I read, when I came to the Ashanti village what interested me most was the European in charge of it. For one who had the honour to know Mary Kingsley and work for her ideas, it was a keen pleasure to meet the proof that her personality, her faith, and her teaching were still living powers.

Captain Rattray is a European devoting himself to the purposes which Mary Kingsley most cared for : doing with infinitely fuller equipment than hers the things that she attempted, yet always recognising the guidance of her inspiration, and marvelling how, in so little time, without knowledge of any native language, she managed to understand so much. That is no small thing. But Mary Kingsley would have thought it far more wonderful that an anthropologist should be appointed political officer on the Gold Coast because he is an anthropologist, and should be allowed to pursue his study of anthropology because the Colonial Office now recognises the necessity of full knowledge concerning the peoples under its control, and recognises that only science can give it.

In truth, the employment of such a man is one among many indications of the fact that very great tracts of West Africa in British occupation to-day are being governed on principles that Mary Kingsley would have approved ; whereas, during her brief

period of public work—it only lasted from 1896 till her death in 1900—this could scarcely have been said of any African colony or protectorate. To-day, in the great territory of Nigeria, with its eighteen million people, administration seeks everywhere to utilise native custom, native law, and native rule. Sir Hugh Clifford follows on the lines which Sir Frederick Lugard laid down. Naturally, there is no universal formula. North of the Niger, Mohammedan Emirs, with a culture at least approaching to that of Morocco, retain their authority in great extent over wide territories ; whereas, south of the Benue, there are many little village states of pagan peoples very far down in the scale, infinitely remoter than the Mohammedans from all our ways and works. Yet even here, and perhaps chiefly here, Mary Kingsley would have contended that there is a racial mind and a culture to consider ; even here the European must understand in order to be understood. She held that the quality which all men understand is justice. But can the white man give justice to the black if he does not understand the black man's law, or custom which is his law ?

In the Gold Coast also, and in the hinterland of Sierra Leone, there are numbers of these small communities not forming part of any considerable state, and therefore difficult to deal with on any principle of delegating rule to a native authority. This is probably true even in the northern territories of the Gold Coast, peopled by races who, though pagan, are much higher in type than the undeveloped tribes of the forest belt. But if these up-country people ever had a political organisation worthy to be called a State, it was destroyed in the period when raiding chiefs, of whom Samory was the latest and the worst, swept these territories ; and the European conquest, following on Samory's overthrow, completed the wreckage. On the other hand, there exist in Nigeria certain pagan states, such as Abbeokuta, which approach in importance to the Mohammedan emirates, such as Kano and Sokoto. Finally, on the Gold Coast, there is the remarkable pagan state to which Captain Rattray has devoted fifteen years of his life. Ashanti only numbers about half a million people ; but it preserves a national life and a national type of its own which, on Mary Kingsley's principles, we have no right to destroy, if their continued existence can be squared at all with our ideas of right and wrong. In details, Ashanti law and usage have had to be changed—that is admitted. But, in order to change them usefully, there must be knowledge, which only anthropology can give. Cannibalism, for instance, is

an ugly word. But if you eat your enemy because he has been so brave that you wish to acquire his quality, the proceeding may be reprehensible, but it assumes a different aspect when the cause is understood. A man is not to be treated as an irreclaimable savage because he gives the most honourable burial possible to his foe. This ceremonial cannibalism—when the flesh is eaten, as an African once said to me, like a prescription—outlasted the simpler form. Yet it has proved possible to induce the Ashantis to forgo this usage—all the more because war has ceased to be the normal state of this notable people whose political organisation was, in essence, military, like that of early feudal Europe. They held out against European conquest longer than any other race of people in West Africa, though they were within a month's march of the coast; and they were conquered finally in the last West African war that was fought by the British.

The most terribly significant thing in Captain Rattray's book on Ashanti is his demonstration that this war need never have been fought if anthropology had been more advanced and more consulted. Here are the facts, as he collected them from 'an old Ashanti of the ruling class, deeply versed in the lore and traditions of his race, whose ancestor was one of the Ashanti kings.' Sixteen kings of Ashanti are recorded: and under the fourth they became a great people by the means of the Golden Stool which was miraculously brought into Coomassie. The medicine man who brought it to the king explained that it contained the soul or spirit of the Ashanti nation, and that if it were captured or destroyed the nation would sicken like a man whose spirit has wandered away or been hurt by another spirit. It was the king's stool, the emblem of his sovereignty; but whereas in every ceremony the head of the clan sat in public upon his emblematic stool, not even the king might sit on the Golden Stool; at most he leant his arm upon it on great public occasions.

There was an Ashanti expedition in 1896 which made captive the King Prempeh. No resistance was offered. When the nation went to battle the Stool went with it, and they feared to take it into a war where defeat was certain. A king could be replaced, but not the Stool; and so Prempeh was given up. But, in 1900, another expedition was sent up, this time to bring in the Stool for token of submission. Sir F. Hodgson, Governor of the Gold Coast, assembled the Ashanti nobles in Coomassie and spoke to them:

'What must I do to the man, whoever he is, who has failed to give to the Queen, who is the paramount power in this country, the stool to which she is entitled? Why am I not sitting upon the Golden Stool at this moment? Why did you not take the opportunity of my coming to Coomassie to bring the Golden Stool and give it me to sit upon?'

The speech was heard in silence, and a few days later war was declared—by the Ashantis. 'I am sure,' says Captain Rattray, 'if the Government of that day had ever known what is here described, it would never have asked for the stool to sit upon, and possibly would not have asked for it at all, and there would have been no siege of Coomassie in 1900.'

The stool was never surrendered, and though its hiding-place was profaned and the stool robbed of its gold, the fact that it was never given up or captured still counts. When the women of Ashanti presented a silver stool to Princess Mary as a wedding gift, the Queen Mother, speaking for them, said :

'It may be that the King's Child has heard of the Golden Stool of Ashanti. That is the stool which contains the soul of the Ashanti nation. All we women of Ashanti thank the Governor exceedingly because he has declared to us that the English will never again ask us to hand over that stool.'

'This stool we give gladly. It does not contain our soul, as our Golden Stool does, but it contains all the love of us Queen Mothers and of our women. The spirit of this love we have bound to the stool with silver fetters just as we are accustomed to bind our own spirits to the base of our stools.'

It sounds as if there were more than a native mind behind this message, and it seems Captain Rattray was consulted as to what would be good to say. But the wording, the exposition of the theme, and the poetry come direct from the old Queen herself, translated by this Scotsman who has the honour to count himself her friend. The existence of such an officer has made it possible for the Ashantis to understand how little the English understood when they demanded this emblem : and the explanation would reach not the men only but the women, in whom everywhere race tradition is most deeply seated, and who in the last resort constitute the problem that has to be resolved if the African is to be brought nearer to our level of civilisation.

Captain Rattray quotes with enthusiasm Mary Kingsley's sentence about 'That old woman whom you may see crouching

behind the chief, or whom you may not see at all, but who is with him all the time and says "Do not listen to the white man; it is bad for you." In Ashanti no skilled observer can be unaware of her: since descent is traced through the mother, woman's position is very strong there. The children are hers, not her husband's; they belong to her clan, not to his.

At a meeting of the nobles there are two stools, and the Queen Mother's has priority over that of the ruling chief. All the beliefs and the institutions which account for this are discussed in Captain Rattray's book, and anthropologists will follow them. But the leading fact for the general reader is that the sovereign European power gives no official recognition to the Queen Mothers, and consequently that 'their position and influence are rapidly passing away.' Yet, 'the Queen Mother is (or was) concerned with the morals of the younger generation.' Does that mean that she has (or had) a certain power to check the deterioration which almost inevitably sets in when a race of primitive culture comes in contact with another, many degrees more advanced? If so, it is serious, and it is a matter on which counsel should be sought from science. For one of the things which Mary Kingsley has effected is that we recognise generally that even in the most primitive races—and Ashantis are very far from that grade—there is a morality which it is wicked to destroy when it can be preserved, since no imported ideas have the same hold as those that are part of the race-mind and the race-memory. We have learnt to ask ourselves whether we are doing good or harm to the Ashantis by making them, as they are, wards of the British Empire, in a literal sense, under the tutelage of this sovereign democracy.

It no longer suffices any instructed European to say that we have brought peace to these people and some material prosperity. These are matters where our interest is theirs. West Africa is never going to be a white man's country: but Mary Kingsley saw and said very clearly that our crowded industrial population needed fair opportunities to buy and sell in it. British rule in the Gold Coast has given trade its first essential—cheap and secure transport. The opportunities which result have been open to the Ashantis, and they have used them. When they ceased to be a people living mainly for war they got the chance to become a people of farmers, and a new commerce was opened to their agriculture. In 1905 four thousand tons of cocoa were exported from the Gold Coast; last year it was almost two hundred thousand tons.

Ashanti, as well as the colony, has gone into cocoa growing, and the two thousand miles of motor road which have been made in the past four years in the Gold Coast have given a chance to all. Their chiefs (according to the statement made by the Governor, Sir F. Guggisberg, to his Council) have co-operated by making tracks running into those main arteries ; so that produce, which, if it had to come by head carriage in the old fashion, could not be sold at a profit, is now marketable on the coast at a price which pays the worker. Thus we have created trade for the Ashantis and facilities for that trade : and there is peace. The era of primitive expeditions is ended, it seems, on the Gold Coast as elsewhere in West Africa. On the whole, life is probably more comfortable for the average man and woman in Ashanti than it used to be ; most certainly it is for their neighbours, on whom they were accustomed to prove their military efficiency.

Again, in one vital matter, progress has been made. Native property in land is studiously respected and the conditions under which it is held are studied and understood. Thirty years ago it sounded like a paradox when Mary Kingsley declared that no land in West Africa was without an owner. Now, Captain Rattray lays that down as a fundamental, and proceeds to explain how the land is owned. That is probably one of the main reasons why we have no more wars. People will fight for their land as for nothing else. Peaceful enjoyment of their land in the traditional manner is the form of peace most valued by primitive peoples. But there is more to it than consideration of material well-being, positive or negative ; more than the chance to earn money and to be free from molestation in daily life. There is the question of the European bacillus, whose effects can be seen in the African population along the coast, which for many generations has been in contact with Englishmen, Dutchmen, Frenchmen, Germans, and so forth, not merely in the way of trade, but under the influence of European ideas concerning government. Generally speaking, the Africans of this type, under the suggestion of Africans who have received a European education, desire to see European institutions and methods of government extended over African territory, but worked by Africans. The Governor's Council is a kind of rudimentary parliament in which there sit already a certain number of Africans—but no Ashantis. Is it to be desired that the Ashanti chiefs should seek for this kind of parliamentary representation ? or rather, that the power at present left to the Ashanti chiefs

should be extended, according as the chiefs prove their ability to govern in a manner not repugnant to a European's ultimate conception of right and wrong? Anthropology would advise for the second alternative. Put it in the simplest way, as a matter of money. In the native states of Northern Nigeria, taxation is collected by the Emirs, and they retain a portion of it as the revenue of their authority. Chieftainship has the means to maintain itself by taxation, which it formerly acquired mainly by taking dues by force; but the money is spent as before, in government according to African ideas. The Ashanti chiefs have not this attribute; they have not these revenues. If they had, it is probable, for instance, that part of it would go towards maintaining that matriarchal authority and dignity of the Queen Mothers in each clan, which, according to Captain Rattray, tends to disappear: and with which there will disappear much that is most characteristic in the Ashanti life. I think Captain Rattray would hold that this element in the native life could not be lost without deterioration to the native character.

Such questions of policy are still open to decision. In the coastwise belt, the colony proper, nobody can put the clock back. The European bacillus is established. For the Africans of this region, legislation thrashed out in the Council, with African members present, becomes law and the Governor gives it his sanction. But these ordinances are only applied to Ashanti or to the Northern Territory at the Governor's discretion. It is possible to aim at maintaining and even extending this distinction—or at abolishing it.

The uninstructed cannot judge upon these matters. But undoubtedly the people by whom one finds Captain Rattray surrounded at Wembley are something different from the Europeanised African. Different, more natural, and, apparently, happier. Jolly, friendly, frank, and courteous, whether nobles or craftsmen, they belong entirely to their own order. Exhibits of their work were to be seen which show by analogy what happens when the European bacillus gets to work. All their silk fabrics, woven in narrow strips, are reversible; each side has the same design, and the design is, according to Captain Rattray, always traditional and significant for the initiated as a Scotch tartan—except that the significances are greatly more varied and go far beyond indicating merely the clan. These cloths have a beauty which all would admit. Beside them is work by weavers of the same race who have been taught in European schools. In their fabrics there is the side to show and

the side not presentable ; and instead of the old designs we find texts woven in, union jacks, and what-not—with results that no artist would approve—things neither African nor European. Again, in a more expressive art, there are at Wembley many wood carvings, done expressly for this exhibition in Ashanti : sculptures representing native groups, even in certain cases representing individuals. A generation ago we should have called them grotesque : to-day, set them beside examples of the modern work that is aiming to get expression rather than plastic beauty in the old sense, and which is the more expressive ? There is a live art in the country anyhow, and beyond doubt the European bacillus will kill it, if it gets free play—or rather, will kill it unless the native growth is fostered by maintenance of local culture.

We have not yet reached the point at which persons concerned with government will admit generally that a government should be concerned with the effect of its measures upon national art, though they might agree that the appearance of bad art where good has been usual, is an unhealthy symptom. But no British Government, at all events, will wholly set aside the question of religion. Without denying that many Christians of West African race have been admirable human beings, it must be said that nearly all lay observers agree on one conclusion. The native West African is improved, as a rule, by becoming Mohammedan and is not improved by becoming Christian. If there be any substance in that contention a Christian State should at least look into the relevant considerations.

One of them is perhaps suggested by a passage which has no direct bearing upon religion. But Christianity is more than a religion—it is a culture ; and the culture of Europe even when Europe is not detached from dogma. Colonel Meynier, a French officer, extremely distinguished for his services both in the Sahara and among the very different peoples of the Niger basin, has written a book called ‘The Conquerors of Lake Tchad,’ which closes with certain general reflections. He traces the degrees of civilisation descending through Africa by successive groups from the north to the Equator ; and he reaches the conclusion that one of the superior races—the Latin or the Berber—cannot without ill consequence undertake the guidance of a race situated several degrees below it in the scale. The results achieved by the direct relations of Europeans with the peoples of the Niger, for instance, are, in his opinion, much inferior to those produced by the Berber influence

on the same race, among whom it created great empires. But when the Berber or Arab has come into contact with the equatorial Negroes, destruction and misery have been the result. And Europeans on the Congo have not a much better record. Colonel Meynier's conclusion is that rule can only be usefully exercised where the disparity between ruled and rulers is not too great.

It is scarcely likely that the world will see completion of Colonel Meynier's idea under which the Latin would instruct the Berber in government, that the Berber may instruct the Sudanese, and the Sudanese the bush Negro : still less likely that the same principle should apply to mission work. What is possible is that the missionary should go to the anthropologist for aid in lessening the gap which divides his own culture from that of the race to whom he is sent. If Captain Rattray's book<sup>1</sup> has any message, it is that the Christian instructed by anthropology will discover in the Ashanti mind much upon which he can build his own fabric.

It is often a good plan to look for truth on your own doorstep, and my own country was Christianised by one of the most remarkable missions that the world has seen. St. Patrick when he came to Ireland found druidism in power. It is not quite certain how much of it he abolished ; but it is certain that he conquered, adapted, and utilised the institutions which were closely connected with it. He got the poets, the historians, and the lawyers on his side ; he helped, it is recorded, to revise the native laws, and among them he preserved what his biographers called ' judgments of just nature '—in other words, so much of the old morality as the Christian found good. Also, he fostered, or allowed the poets to foster, their pride in the past. Christian poets and Christian chroniclers preserved the old epics of pre-Christian battle, and the achievements of pagan kings. Ashanti may be at peace now, and may prefer to be ; but one can be sure that the racial memory dwells with delight on the past. No missionary who cannot at least feel a tolerance for that pride is likely to have the success with the Ashanti that St. Patrick had with the Irish.

<sup>1</sup> 'Ashanti.' By Capt. R. S. Rattray, M.B.E. Clarendon Press.

## A GREAT ROCK CLIMB.

*THE GRÉPON FROM THE MER DE GLACE.*

BY GEOFFREY WINTHROP YOUNG.

GREAT artists have claimed that their world held no greater pleasure for them than the sight of a white expanse of wall, which they were free to frescoe in imagination with creatures more perfect than any which their hand could afterwards execute. And yet they tell us that the creative impulse of their craft has driven them impatiently to the doubtful attempt, in pursuit of a realisation more actual if less idealistic than their dream-pictures. To a mountaineer there is no less enchantment in the prospect of a fair wall of untouched rock, upon which his fancy is at liberty to trace innumerable ideal lines. And he can claim the same indulgence as the artist for the impulse which compels him, as a craftsman, to take the earliest opportunity of translating his perfect vision into mediocre performance. A mountaineer's failure, at least, botches no surface. Even his success reduces by no more than the breadth of a single line the expanse left virgin for the enterprise of his successors.

When I passed along the Mer de Glace under the great precipices of the Grépon during the summer which followed our first ascent from this glacier, their red memories were veiled behind a sheeting of unseasonable ice. They looked as if no cloud had ever clung successfully to them, much less a solid sequence of human boots. The traces of our conflict and of our companionship were as lost as the echoes of our voices. The first thought was only of satisfaction : it is opportunity for new achievement which each succeeding generation needs to develop its initiative ; not the evidence, nor even the memory of the achievements of its predecessors. An untroubled mountain face does more than any number of diagrams to provoke manhood. But with the afterthought came a tinge of regret : the emotions of that day had been too entrancing, the exploits of our leader too heroic, for me to wish for them no longer continuance than that of a short human recollection. It would have been comforting to think that in some other dimension of

space all that was good in them might be still surviving, adding something to the impetus towards bold adventure, imperceptible but imperishable, like the ripple-rings of a rain-drop on the face of the sea. The most beautiful product of human life is its relationships, the faultless affection which may exist between too faulty natures,—in itself a separate personality, more deserving of remembrance than either of the characters from which it emanates. For their relationships, and not for the individuals, we would, if we could, claim immortality. And in that same dimension would survive the relationships, likewise greater than ourselves, which we can establish with less animate nature, with ennobling presences such as mountains, and the separate personalities, better semblances of our own, created during our unselfish moments of combined action, under circumstances of danger or of wonder.

We all needed a breathing-space that season. Our previous adventures had left us restless, our nerves edged by the long, close companionship and by the strain of common excitement. A break of singleness and silence among the comfortable peaks suggested itself as the remedy. For my own part in it, I idled up under the trees to the Col du Géant ; and the next day sped peaceably down the ice-falls and the long glacier to the Montenvers. Even on the higher plateaux there was little snow of concealment for the crevasses. The frank difficulties of the open *séracs* were only a diversion. These lonely days, when they come of their own accord, are the reward for many years of vigilant apprenticeship to mountains. When eye and hand and foot can be relied upon to act together for our security, all but automatically, the hour may come when we can feel free of preoccupation, free to sink our consciousness wholly in our surroundings. This is the supreme joy of solitary wandering, self-forgetfulness, the merging of our own identity in every detail and emotional suggestion of our changing environment.

It was something of a ‘sentimental journey.’ Every jagged sky-line high in the blue afternoon was an old hunting-ground. Almost every vista opening up the sunny side-glaciers was associated with some camp of uneasy sleep or nervous night-grey start upon new adventure. The mere sense of irresponsibility was exhilarating. There was no reason for sitting down on one island rock in the wilderness of ice more than upon another ; so to sit down or not to sit down anywhere seemed equally daring and delightful. There was no reason for getting up again at one moment rather than

at another ; so to get up, or to lie back more deliberately and stare into the confusion of peak and sky, had all the excitement of an inspiration. There was no reason for going fast or slow ; so pace and mood went in step, unnoticed and refreshingly ungoverned. In the morning the craning head of the Dent du Géant had seemed to be trying to exercise a prying supervision. But after a grown-up game of hide-and-seek with its inquisitiveness, down the big *séracs*, both its head and the game passed out of mind among new trivialities. On the lower levels of the ice-sea even that last Alpine instinct, for the 'clock,' dissolved in luminous vagueness. Noon-glare, sunset, moonlight, any obscurity would serve for the last miles of rambling, over the starred cracks in the great unreflecting mirror, down to the Montenvers. Not to have thought consciously for hours of wholesome activity is happiness. But rarely can we light upon a way so nicely aligned between excitement and monotony as to render un-thought possible.

Reunited, refreshed, and all five in company, we moved up to an old-time camp, an oasis of sand, lichen, and moraine above the glacier and under Trélaporte. One of us in recording that night has reflected upon the absence of soup, and upon the lack of sympathy we showed for each other's lonely searchings for lost objects in the dark, pensive moments of the next day's awakening. Indeed, we were bemused with weeks of mountain air and action, drowsy with the magic of the stars. The stars never seem so near as when we are lying alone at night on the breasts of hills ; when we half waken in the dark to feel the stir of the dawn-wind filling the lungs of earth under us like the sighing of sleep, and lifting, lifting us nearer to the laughter, closer to the discovery of the secrets which the stars are whispering across our faces, and through our half-open eyes to the still dreaming world. An unseemly and unlikely party we yawned the wrong way over the shoulder of Trélaporte, and slipped our sacks and sat down at the head of every greasy grass gully. The dank night-moisture of verdure-clad rock is an offence in the dusky hours, slimy and ominous as Nilotic mud. The craving of insufficient sleep was upon us, an oppression peculiar to times of rude health and placid thinking. In the war-years who noticed how little or how broken was his light, listening sleep ? But how often in the holiday weeks of the Alps has the soul ached, even in dreams, at the prospect of hearing the fateful knock, and longed disgracefully even for rain to postpone its interruption. When we came up over the shoulder, and on to

the small hanging glacier below the Grépon precipices, we set down our sacks in a formal row, as if for ever ; and sat upon them, gazing hopelessly into a heartless world. I know I wished desperately for a miracle, that something would dissipate the rest of the party, painlessly, into the landscape, and that—incredible thought !—I should be left undisturbed to droop as I sat into exquisite sleep. But the momentum of our uncertainty as to each other's degree of demoralisation drove us on to our feet again at last, and up to the great bergschrund under the Grépon rocks. And here the story of Galatea was repeated—as it always is if our lifeless limbs can only hold on long enough against debility and shadow. But, in an unexpected manner. The bergschrund which I had twice before crossed slightly in earlier explorations of the cliffs, had fed on unusual sunshine and waxed fat ; and now it kicked. Its upper ice-lip, scornfully up-curled some twenty feet above our heads, defied us absolutely to bridge the chasm at any point. This was too much. We might be ready to turn back at our own inward whisper of 'sleep.' But to be defied by the morning gape of an initial bergschrund barely a few hundred feet long——! We hurled ourselves into a very difficult turning movement, up a sneer of adhesive snow which prolonged the ice-grin on to the adjoining cheek of bare rock. The effort tuned us up. We cut steps on a diagonal back to our left, up the all but vertical ice above the schrund ; and at last got our feet on to the good red rock. Then, like a slow-coiled spring released, we went off with a bang.

There are few tracts that suggest a moon-world of primitive matter so starkly as this glacis of the Grépon, a welter of red and yellow and ashen slabs, water-smoothed and tilted at vast irregular angles. We had 'roped' at the schrund ; but we had worked too long together that year for the long rope to exert its usual check upon pace, or even upon consciousness. The great Red Tower, which stands upon the slabs like a sentinel, and which marked the limit of all previous explorations, was soon close above us ; and then behind us. We sped on and up, following the indefinite gutter of a lost but lively little stream, until the knees of the four-thousand-foot precipice bumped out at us, and we had to draw breath for the beginning of our serious work, and make our choice of line for the day. There are no allowances for 'first faults' on this ascent of the Grépon. As it was hit off in the beginning, so the line soars straightly with us, to whatever end we have merited ; and there

is only one right line. Above us, and a little to our left, a gigantic cascade of yellow slabs swept down from the sky-ridge. Away up, and on their left, these slabs were bounded by a greyer rib, which seemed to mount far towards the highest summit. Above us, and on our right, a second slighter rib slanted up towards a more northerly peak. Up one or other of these two ribs lay the only climbs offering any chance of continuity. But the rib above on the right did not lead to the highest summit,—and it had been climbed before. Somehow or other we must make a lodgment on the lower end of the left rib, and that before we found ourselves floundering among the yellow slabs, pounded upon the hopelessly smooth scales of the dragon-snout, which seemed already to be nuzzling its way stealthily downward between us and our solitary grey-ribbed hope.

Something was wrong with our leader. All down the rope came the shiver-on-the-brink feeling. And indeed the thought of taking hold, of committing ourselves finally to the wrestle with those gruesome slabs, was intimidating. We seemed to be compromising, titubating. We had traversed tentatively to the right; and now back again to the left, on a wrinkle-scramble of least resistance. This brought us near to the lifting rim of a huge gash down the crags; and beyond this again we could look across at a flat-backed chasm. It was a double line of vertical defences, which divided us grimly from the butt-end of our rib of hope, still far above us on the left. It looked to be time to get to grips with this crossing. Josef was climbing petulantly. This was the crucial point, obvious to him as to us. But he did not even pause before flighting away up the wrinkle-craggs to the right again, keeping up a cross-clatter of ejaculations with Brocherel, that smothered any murmurs. His very fashion of ‘launching away’ made one smile: it was so clearly not ‘meant.’ I looked up. On the line the men were resuming we might spend a number of invaluable hours in forcing a few hundred feet of tautening slabs; and then we should be immobilised upon a blank and ghastly wall, as helpless as cows upon ice. If we could not rush the defences, and cross on to the grey rib at this the latest possible point, the game would be up—and we should not. It was no use arguing; Josef’s back, as he scrabbled up the slabs with unnecessary emphasis, told me that he knew what I was thinking, and thought the same, but that having decided in himself that the traverse was hopeless he was taking this method of demonstrating the futility of the whole climb early in the day. His

variable hill-mood had every ground for mistrust. This aspect of the Grépon resembles the inside of a broken fragment of basin. Seemingly concave throughout, the milder curve near the bottom steepens smoothly up to the vertical rim. If the human beetles were already crawling up with difficulty, what measure of daylight or of clingfulness would serve to see them up the incalculably worse beyond? I unroped, and traversed cautiously upward to the left, over the rock lip, and across the gash; until I could look down into the second couloir. It looked an obvious channel for falling stones. So I waited for a few formal seconds, to see if any fell. Meanwhile I scraped clear a knob on the brink, which seemed designed to hold a doubled rope for our sheer descent into the chasm. Once down, the traverse across the polished back of the trough should go, I thought; and there, a little above, on its farther side, rose a series of sloping ledges and brackets, such as, with one or two permissibly doubtful steps, must lead us up, and up, and out on to the promised landing of grey rib! I chuckled inwardly; and called to Brocherel to come down and across from above, and to H. O. Jones to come up and across from below; so as to give enough rope for the experiment. Josef of course joined us; and while we arranged the rope round the knob, and I lowered myself into the couloir, he cast a dangerous eye over the position, and remarked mildly that it was all very well to get down, but how, if we were beaten higher up, were we to reascend the sheer wall without the rope from above? It was a pertinent question—although had his mood been normal the matter of return was not one Josef would have bothered about. I glanced up, and round, examining every crinkle of the smooth rock-chute as I clung. It would never do to be caught out at the start of such a deliberate schism: more was at stake than a mere ascent of the Grépon! Then—I waved my hand reassuringly—as if I had seen it all along—towards a small bracket high up on the far wall of the couloir, whence a second man could belay the leader for his reascent of the ‘cut-off,’ if we had in fact to turn back. Josef subsided gracefully. He did not believe, I am sure, that I had discovered that bracket before I had started the traverse; but the gods were evidently fighting for the other point of view; and that was sufficient for his mountainy temperament. From that moment he flung himself into the struggle as if certain of victory. The backwash from his new confidence quivered through the whole party. For the rest of the day they could be content to concentrate upon their own delectable holds, and watch with admiration

the battle between the midget and the mountain raging above their heads. So

‘ to the hills,  
For earth hath this variety from heaven  
Of *pleasure* situate in hill and dale—  
Light as the lightning-glimpse, they ran, they flew.’

We fared indeed better than the Miltonic angels ; for the Grépon hurled no mountain-tops upon our heads. For all that, the traverse of the couloir was not easy—the holds were but filmy ; and we raced across it with one eye upwards for the stones that did not fall. And yet anything seemed kindly as an escape from our initial experiences on the yellow slabs. The ascent up the far side of the chasm went nobly. Short as the distance which we had ascended appeared, as compared with the perpendicularity above us, we had already been involved among hollow slabs and hollower doubt for five and a half hours. So we settled ourselves on the genial jut of the grey rib, and breakfasted, and talked of past successes to keep up the psychic barometer, while the often-pictured ‘ Crag on the Grépon ’ reared its warning head over us, high above on the farther left. If ever a speculative eye wandered away up the waterfall of smooth slabs from which our rib emerged but hesitantly, we recalled it, with a bright dutiful smile upward at our one thread of hope, the suggestion of linking notch and crack which seemed to connect our perch with the remote impending sky-line.

We crept onward, up the wrinkle ; and came almost at once upon a triangular level platform fitted into a rock corner, so restful and singular that we unanimously voted it a name—the *Niche des Amis*. Josef, still trying to preserve his dignity of gloom—in the seconds when he remembered it !—said it would do well for our night-bivouac when we were turned back. We left it by a memorable crack, a forty-five-foot right-angled and vertical corner, with just one upright slit for the hand to shift up in, and a convenient leaf for one thrusting foot. Above this, chimney and slab and flake followed in too lavish and rapid succession to allow of orderly recall. Often the rock was actually overhanging, but it was magnificently rough and firm ; the usual hold was an under-pull for the hands and friction for the feet. H. O. Jones has written of this section : ‘ At 9 we were off once more, and from this time until the summit was reached at 2, the climbing was always difficult, usually exceedingly difficult, twice verging on the impossible, but

—it was undoubtedly superb ! ' It would be impossible to describe the line in detail. It cannot be mistaken, because there is no alternative. All that need be said is that we seemed to be clinging up a one-and-only feasible life-line wavering over the very break of a thunder of hopeless slabs. The strands of this line of cracks were stretched so thin that after every panting fifty-foot struggle I hardly dared look upward at the next loom of rock breakers, lest this time a link might have snapped, and one of the ninety-nine probabilities, of a holdless section intruding, might have at last obliterated our hundredth chance, the persistent little miracle of the connected chain of trifling faults. Above us the contracting, steepening uprush of russet slabs crested over against a dead-blue sky. Below us they swirled dizzily downward to a white haze of glaciers, through which, rather than upon which, the great curving moraines eddied darkly, like sea-cress seen through a shallowing crawl of surf. Had there been time to think, that menacing, vertical threat above us might have been daunting. But warm, gritty flake and crack and angle took us comfortably by the hand and foot, and drew us on and up, with little nips and prods of encouragement. Even hard-trained muscles grew tired of their own satisfaction. Often enough they rebel against single feats beyond their strength. But I remember no other occasion upon which they creaked and murmured at the mere continuance of varied and pleasurable exercise within their powers. Our rib-wrinkle struggled upward long and gallantly. We clung to it as to a happy straw of disturbance parting the glassy planes of a waterfall. But where the ' Crag on the Grépon ' showed close above on the left, and the peak collected all its smooth ferocity for the violent jet of its summit aiguilles, the riblet gave up the fight, protesting in an odd little spurt of rock which projected from the machine-cut slabs like a camel's hump ; a last hummock, with a white saddle of snow thrown carelessly on behind it. Here we assembled ; and Todhunter, who was climbing last on the rope, materialized for us again agreeably. For many hours—so steep and continuous was the angle of ascent—he had been for me only the glimpse of a small kid-gloved hand fluttering out of nothingness deep below Jones' heels, and fingering delicately some spare coils of rope, which he was taking in as he climbed, unaided—to save time !

As we sat, and fed, and thought, we heard a thin unearthly hail, and looking upward, discovered in impertinent movement between the stable rocks and the still sky far above our heads the white

face-specks of a party, craning over from the tip of the final tower to peer down upon us. Little wonder that they descended to Chamonix to spread report of a 'mad tea-party' clustered far down on the Mer de Glace face, certainly there for the night, and may be for ever. For, even for ourselves, roosting upon our frivolous little hump, both the outlook and our feelings about it, must have been much those of an intelligent fly, as it sits on a picture-nail in a Cathedral, and looks up at the vaulting and down at the pavement. Only—we were not flies! However, Josef was by now keyed up well beyond any Grépon 'pitch,' and he rocketed off the saddle again, in the silent rush of inspired movement which best interpreted his mountain heart. A sequence of difficult cracks brought us up on to a narrow ribbon of rock, which wound horizontally across the sun-scorched face, like a string-course round the contour of a steeple. On our right the ribbon ran out into absurdity, upon extravagant precipices. We followed it to the left, over a blind corner; and it led us, Grépon fashion, to the foot of a stark chimney slitting cleanly and darkly up the cataract of slabs. For some two hundred feet, in part overhanging, it split the sheer wall above our heads. Then it appeared to evaporate upon leaning space, prospectless. I skirted along the ribbon a little farther to the left. I thought I saw some chance of a hazardous traverse across to the fantastic needles crowning the main ridge, which was now sweeping upward past us on the left, on its way to the summit. But I could not discover any direct line up our wall other than the chimney. Since that time Franz Lochmatter has proved me wrong. Had we gone yet a few steps farther round the bulge, we should have come upon an easier line of broken rock bending right-handed up the slabs, and rejoining our line above the fearsome chimney. Possibly I was over-preoccupied with a fear lest, if we followed the ribbon too far, we should be tempted to escape across on to the sky-line ridge, and so fail to complete our ascent by the Mer de Glace face of the peak. For the rest of the party it was sufficient that there had hitherto never been more than one line of advance, and that there before us was the grim chimney!

We built a small cairn on the ribbon at its foot; and strung ourselves out up its repellent narrows. At two-thirds of its height the chimney breasted out in an overhang. Josef passed me down his sack—an objectionable contingency to which I was so accustomed in our partnership that I had made a precautionary practice of rarely carrying one myself. He then wriggled up past the bulge,

to some invisible ledge. Brocherel's bigger shoulders, broadened by his sack, jibbed so long at the same spot that I had time to grow cold on my eagle-spread of damp nick and knob, and to begin to speculate on the displeasures of a return down the perpendicular vacancy revealed between my legs—always an enervating trick of thought. Jones and Todhunter 'joined' me; that is to say, Jones' smile widened across emptiness immediately under my right boot, while, as I looked down over the plumb-line of his back, I saw between his parted heels a gloved hand, daintily rising into view, and still flickering its neat coils of rope. In the meanwhile, Josef and Brocherel were audibly engaged with something particularly ferocious out of sight, and some sixty feet above my head. Josef's exclamatory shrills trickled down to me, and as I knew them to be his modal reflection of the penultimate phase in desperate climbing effort, I was induced to notice how ludicrously the rest of us were placed to resist any incidence of the unseen. With the realisation came the little fretful shivers and contractions of the muscles over the ribs and chest which give us the impression of the fluttering breath of fear. There followed a worse and very long moment of deep gasps, the rasp of scraping boot-nails, and the tac and chink of the axe-point nicking into hard rock. The ultimate phase was in progress! The 'axe-cling,' and silence, were symptomatic of the calling up of Josef's last reserves! Axe-climbing was a freakish art, perfected by Franz Lochmatter and himself in the wild autumn weeks when the last tourist had departed, and they stormed in reckless company over their home-peaks after probably illicit chamois. I had seen them at such times glissading in rivalry down rubbly rock bluffs, at angles that the rest of us might hardly attempt on the better surface of smooth ice, and then pulling themselves up the rock again, where there was neither hand- nor foot-hold, by arm-twists on their nicked axe-points. But now, in our present exposed position, even to think of such acrobatics as in progress beyond the dark jut of invisibility above our heads was—distasteful! Hours seemed to pass; so many, in seeming, that the little movement of the sun suggested that it too had been standing still to watch in wonder. A breathless shrill of relief, and of summons, announced that Josef had arrived somewhere from nowhere. Brocherel followed it with a remote call that I was to join him, and that he was 'good' to hold the rope, but not to help me with it. Below, we were chilled, and perhaps a little ruffled. When it came to axe-clings I preferred at least to be in a position to keep a reflective

and upcast eye upon the dubious proceeding. I arrived at the constricted, overhanging section of the crack ; and there, try as I would, I could not force my shoulders, with the heavy sack, past the cloven bulge :

‘ Under the weight of mountains buried deep . . .  
Their armour helped their harm, crushed in and bruised  
Into their substance pent, which wrought them pain  
Implacable, and many a dolorous groan,  
Long struggling underneath, ere they could wind  
Out of such prison — ’

I let off some feelings by saying it would not ‘ go ’ loudly and emphatically. Josef would have treated such formal protest in his usual manner, tightening the rope abstractedly and turning his watchful eye tactfully inward upon some mountaineering dream unconnected with the surface situation. Brocherel had a shorter experience, and translated the protest into a bald bellow to Josef— ‘ Monsieur ne monte pas ! ’ Fine shades of temper were clearly wasted upon such crude interpretation. So up I wriggled. The chimney gave out upon a narrow gutter, under a brow-beat of slab. Up its frontal bone ran a perpendicular furrow ; and straddled across this, where the brow-beat gave back a little above, Brocherel was balanced precariously on rudimentary holds. Just above his head a great dome of cliff boomed out in a steel-smooth overhang. Of Josef there was no trace. For a second I hardly dared let myself believe that he had escaped out of the trap ; for the only conceivable exit lay up to the right and round the curved profile of the overhang, well above Brocherel’s head, by the way of a pendulous noselet of rock which slanted into space from the underside of the dome. But there was no leisure even for incredulity. The rope ran up that way, out of sight. Brocherel was already making room for me, by hanging on to one knob with one nail while I moved up on to his ‘ holds.’ Then, with grateful lightness for so large a man, he stepped up on to my shoulders, and thence on to my head, steadyng himself with his hands against the smooth side of the noselet above him. Soon he was clinging with his knees over its pendulous tip ; and then, out of my sight, and exclaiming and scrabbling furiously, and more and more remotely, up some hidden angle of impossibility.

H. O. and I repeated the preliminary tactics. From a comparatively restful standing-place upon his capable head I squirmed with my knees up and over the odious parrot-beak, only to find myself, beyond it, committed by the rope to the precipitance of the unutter-

able slab which the overhang had been hitherto concealing from us. There may have been air-pockets over the smooth face of that all but perpendicular slab : there was certainly no other perceptible irregularity. I slipped with my knees, slithered with hands and elbows, and flopped like a fish against the haul of the tight, thin waist-line. Just below my futile boots the slab slid over into space. Above my head it towered evilly—until in a high dark angle, between the outward leaning cliffs, it died away upon a sort of corner-bracket of hope. Out of this dark corner peered Brocherel's pallid face ; while Josef's dark-puttied legs dangled down beside him, the rest of him hidden behind a belaying splinter of rock. Exasperation was my only conscious feeling : a surprise of anger at the place being even worse than I had allowed for ; irritation at my helplessness ; vexation with Josef for attempting it, and vexation with my own vexation—for after all it was the best-worst way out of a cheerless position. Death may be as certain from above a hundred-foot drop ; but imagination and the view down a three-thousand-foot wall can make a far more flustersome business of it ! I might not pull myself up the rope with my hands—fatal temptation !—for that would prevent the men above from hauling it in, and so increase the risk with every foot I might gain. And apart from the rope there was no hold at all. I could but scuffle, and try to spread myself adhesively, like butter—melting butter, on a tilted plate ! A microscopic crack sloping steeply upward appeared above me on the left. I reached it. It was too small and shallow to admit even a finger-tip. But here and there in it I could see tiny dark spots, where Josef had snicked in the point of his amazing axe, and dragged himself up the slab by its single support. But how he held himself at that angle, and upon that surface, for the seconds during which he was shifting up the pick to a new hold—only he himself and the sky could know ! I marvel even now to think of that lonely fight, far up ahead on the blind, leaning wall, a duel with immensity uncheered, even unwitnessed.

Somehow it was over at last ; and I had hold, panting and rope-rumpled, of Josef's dangling foot. And immediately the dread and vexation dropped behind and were forgotten, as is the way of our climbing humours. There remained only a bright froth of relief and a sediment of annoyance that so stupendous a climb should be marred by one 'impossible' section. I saw to it at once that the spare rope should be sent down for the others, so that they might be relieved of some part of the unreasonable terrors of the

slab. To get off the corner-bracket, and up the leaning angle of cliff, meant yet another short but severe struggle. And then we were out on a sociable sloping platform, where we could meet again, and rest, and talk out our remaining breath. Josef was beyond any safety-valve of speech. If he attempted a compressed remark, he sizzled like an engine under too high a head of steam. To have checked him long might have been perilous ; and at the first sign he was away with a leap that floated him out of sight in an instant. 'The bottom of the mountains upward turned' could not now have smothered his soaring energy, much less any lighter obstructions which the Grépon had left in its skyey armoury. Mountains are as human as Milton's angels. We rarely find in climbing that they repeat a supreme resistance twice in the same form. Their capacity in offence is limited ; and from a concentration that has failed to check our advance they seem to require time to recover. Only if their offensive has succeeded, and they have forced us to retreat, do they appear to be ready to strike again immediately, and harry our descent promptly and viciously.

We avoided the provocation of saying so aloud, but I think that we all began to feel, after this astonishing passage, that the victory in some form or another was, after all, to be ours. At the worst, we should not now have to return by the way we had come. The pinnacles on the mounting sky-line of the main southern ridge were challenging us always more closely from across the brown precipices on our left. We could surely escape out on to them if the wall of the final tower above us proved, on trial, to be as inaccessible as it looked. Josef jodelled at us, out of an invisible kink in higher space. A lively, almost vertical chimney, of some hundred and twenty brisk feet, supplied our muscles again after the halt, and spurted us out in a shrapnel-shower up a following of steep slab and crack. Different anatomies can never reconcile their estimates of the same rock climb : a leaning, semi-detached monolith, some fifteen feet high, up which four of us, with our longer arms just jammed in its only crack, swarmed all unnoticed, appeared to the last man the crux of the whole ascent. For the first and only time the rest of us were gratified by a cessation in the neat coils of rope hunting below our heels, and the gloved hand seemed constrained for once to abandon its 'time-saving' fashion of pursuit. 'It may be an excellent rule in rock climbing,' Todhunter records, 'to keep the arms in reserve for some supreme effort that is never required, but on the final five hundred feet of the Mer de Glace face

of the Grépon the rule is best honoured in a continuous breach. However, the end was now at hand. Another fifty-foot chimney, and the party were looking down on the Nantillons Glacier from the well-known gap between the Pic Balfour and the summit. The great rock wall had been climbed ; but the summit of the Grépon had still to be reached.'

We were now gathered at the foot of the final problem—the upstanding red citadel of the Grépon. The crests of its southern arête notched the sky close above us on the left. Unanimously we had swung out to the left, and up on to the breach under the Pic Balfour, more, I think, to enjoy the relief of free sight and open breath than with any idea of finishing the ascent from this side. The magic of the view from alpine heights owes much of its effect to contrast : the sensation of startling relief which colours sight and rekindles emotion as we emerge on the wide freedom of a summit, after long hours of confinement upon a near, obscuring wall. We had plenty of daylight in hand, and a fresh confidence to bring to the examination of the impressive attempt before us. On the far northern side of the citadel the crack of ordinary ascent and Venetz' original cleft were safely out of the way of our temptation, cut off from us by the sheer flanking walls. Above us, on the near side, as we stood in the gap, we could see the corner masking the Dunod chimney, by means of which—and of a doubled rope—the descent from the summit is usually made. We might be driven to ascend by this line as a last resort. It had been done, and could therefore be done : a matter of nice judgment with a lasso and of a projecting knob. But the unsurpassable climbing on the gigantic red-brown slabs deserved an independent finish of its own. We were resolved, if possible, to end as we had begun on the Mer de Glace wall, a new and through route from base to summit.

We redescended from the gap, and returned round above our familiar abyss ; scrambling along and up the sharp edge of a flake conveniently split off the face of the citadel. The flake brought us to the foot of a rift, in the centre of the wall, the only flaw in the last defences. If I remember rightly, this rift corresponds to that of ordinary ascent up the northern flank ; the two formed by a single cleavage of the vast block that constitutes the summit. But whereas the crack on the farther Nantillons face mounts, as it were, the convex back of the rock wave, that upon the Mer de Glace face is sucked up into the underside of its inclining crest. Josef and Brocherel manœuvred, exclaimed, and gritted off the spiny

flake, and up into the splayed foot of the overhanging cleft. Brocherel, with his big head crushed skew-wise into his midriff by the rock, sprawled his Promethean legs over invisible supports on the sloping floor of the gutter-shoot, and offered a pessimistic basis for Josef's acrobatics. The rest of us, clinging in a row up the razor-edge of the flake underneath—limpets or gargoyles above the profundity of red wall according to the point of view—followed the evolutions with cricked necks and tightening chests. The overhanging chimney was short. It looked to have something of the character of a Gothic niche for a saint, surmounted by a canopy. The back of the niche was cracked, and the crack was prolonged upward and outward through the canopy-bulge. From a crouching balance on Brocherel's shoulder Josef hooked his axe-pick into the crack, high up at the back of the niche. With this for hold he wrestled upward, with his feet using press-holds against the outward-sloping walls of the niche, to a more secure position under the roof. Bridged and straddled high above our heads, he tried again and again to reach out and up, and jamb some part of one hand in the thin crack above the projecting bulge. Try as he might, writhe and grit furiously, he could not gain a secure hand-cling. Even the axe-pick refused to grip the fissure, since the rock, undercut below it, left the shaft unsupported. The obstinate efforts were renewed time and again, until watching became intolerable. For a curious relief I glanced downward under my knee, where it rode the rough red edge, and dissipated sight more comfortably down the infinity of brown depth, and away across a chaos of glacier, a level of restfulness so remote that its murmur seemed not to belong to our present. A new sound from above recalled me. I looked up. Josef was in the throes of a last daring inspiration. He whipped his axe upward, balanced himself audaciously outward, and with lightning speed wedged the point of the axe-shaft into the crack above the bulge of the canopy, so that the axe-head projected horizontally and frailly into space, between our heads and the sky. Except for its sensational circumstance the next manœuvre looked like a simple gymnasium trick. Using the wedged shaft as a horizontal bar, Josef dangled clear of the niche, and swung himself up on to it as adroitly as a Japanese juggler, until he was standing upon it—over us and nothingness. The rest of the climb looked to be a triumphal wedding-glide up a widening smile of appreciative chimney. But for minutes afterwards, while we shouted our admiration to all the echoes of the mountains, I

heard him fighting for breath, prone upon the flat summit overhead, as surely Josef never panted on a rock before !

During our long suspense below, the rest of us had been agreeing in interrupted mutterings that for perhaps the first time in our lives we were all conscious of muscles frankly wearied out by the day-long persistence of unrelenting difficulty. Hope, sunshine, excitement, glorious rocks, training, and tried companionship, all the fuels that make of strength an inexhaustible flame—we felt them all still burning brightly within and without. And yet we had to admit that for anything beyond a certain routine of movement our machinery would no longer work. That any form of exertion could actually exhaust our muscular reserves, while the spirit and the will still remained vigorous as morning, was a novel discovery ; and to be forced to recognise it at such a point both rueful and comic. But the small coruscation of steel, whalebone, and mountain fire warring with all the earth forces above our heads seemed to be aware of no such limitation. As a manifestation of nerve, skill, and power, Josef's issue from the niche would have been remarkable on a ' hotel boulder ' after an idle morning. Performed at the end of some ten hours of excessively exacting climbing, over a void that seemed to swallow the nerves into its yawn of hostile space, the feat seemed to us almost superhuman. The ascent will, I hope, often be repeated ; now that the horrific slab has been eliminated there is no finer rock climb in the Alps ; and our first estimate will, of course, be progressively reduced. But I have little fear that the applause with which we acclaimed the first passage of the final crack will ever be thought exaggerated—at least by those who ' lead ' the crack themselves.

We had plenty of spare rope, and the actual height was not great. Brocherel entangled his bulk in a network of stout cord, made an athletic effort to shatter his way through the canopy, and, kicking and ejaculating, finished the rest of the ascent after the fashion arranged for their visitors by the Monks of Meteoro. Then the rope came down for me, and Josef had recovered sufficiently to beam down over the edge at my struggles and give them an unusual share of his discreetly abstracted attention. I was allowed to try the crack my own way ; but, scraping and gnashing, I could no more emerge from that saintly sloping niche than if I had been respectably sculptured in stone and erected within it. Finally I tied on all the loose ends of rope within reach, took a firm hold of any others that promised connection with the ultimate, and

arrived on the summit, safely enmeshed. The others wasted less time, and joined us—equally ‘meteorically.’

The flat table-top of the Grépon must be the meeting-place of numberless happy memories; but it can never have supported a more reminiscent and more luxuriously prostrate gathering. The sun had waited for us, and met our eyes on a long level of golden placidity, as genial as had been its tranquil support during the fighting hours of the day. All the world seemed to be open, shining before our thought, even into its sombre corners of cobweb and puzzlement. A philosophy of life which is based upon getting admirably tired, and then dreaming the universe into shape through the coloured moments of reaction, is, probably, open to criticism. But it may be that some of us, of the less intellectual habit, require some ten to fifteen hours of strenuous rhythmic exertion before our ill-balanced energies of mind and body can achieve the working harmony, the equable outlook and in-look, which are essential for an appreciation of even those few glimpses into understanding which are revealed to the obtuse only in their instants of self-forgetful rest.

As we drifted down the ordinary descent of the Grépon, the rope which still bound us together on the obverse of our great wall served as only reminder that there was still earth under our feet. The sense of fulfilment, of health, effort, and contentment perfected, might otherwise have persuaded us that we were travelling upon easy wings. Is there any other human experience so complete, so rounded off in its actions and reactions, as a great and successful mountain climb? In snatches we recalled to each other the impressions of the day, as they fluttered into memory at their pleasant will. But all the time we were looking out over a lower turbulence of evening mist, at the last scene in a pageant of gorgeous sunset in which we ourselves had some unexplained but sympathetic part. In mood, at least, we were transfigured. The grumbling band who had lagged up Trélaporte the same morning belonged already to an earlier, earthlier existence, of drab spirit cluttered in dross. Doubtless, I argued, as we paused on the glacier to coil up the rope, the philosophers of the street would call our state of mind a delusion. Our ingenious adventure, our self-sought perils on a line of unreason to the summit of a superfluous rock, have no rational or moral justification. Our consequent luxury of feeling has, therefore, no reality, except in an equally irresponsible imagination. But again I knew, in every

fibre, that this was not so. And fortunately the purposeless splendour of the sunset, transforming the Jura into a restless fairyland under our eyes, suggested an answer sufficient for the mood. For the sunset, too, was unreal, with neither moral nor object, and the effect of its beauty upon ourselves was but another product—if a more universally accepted one—of a romantic convention. And if both the sunset and the climb were unrealities, and their effects negligible or improper, the sincerest part of our personalities must belong to the same worthless category, for they were patently and wholly responsive to the unreal emotions which the sun and the mountain were producing! I felt I could be content to be irrational, or even immoral, in such good company. Every purified particle in me proclaimed that a good climb—and this had been of the best—was, for me, only a good thing, and as genuine an influence as my sort of nature deserved. Sufficient of life, sufficient of discipline, sufficient of thought, for some of us, in the circle of mountain, sunset and new sunrise: sufficient not only as motive for our activity, but as inspiration in our time of rest.

Along the windings of the forest path, down from the Plan des Aiguilles the last motley plumes of failing light trailed through the branches and about our feet, feathers fallen from the wings of contentment which had seemed to bear us from the glaciers. As I watched them altering in darkness, and contracting to the twilight glimmer of the valley streams, I resolved that there should be no anti-climax: for me at least this completed and complete climbing day should form the close of the most perfect season of our alpine lives.

'TUAN CAN-DO.'<sup>1</sup>

BY BOYD CABLE.

## II.

FROM the first instant of the rending crash of the *Hai-tan's* striking to the last when she disappeared in the boiling and spouting waters, there was an interval of perhaps no more than three or four minutes ; but at such times life is measured by actions rather than by the clock, and the minutes were close packed with quick-following frenzied thought and action.

The first shock stunned everyone into silence, and for clear seconds there was no sound but that horrible riving and tearing of the *Hai-tan's* body. Then she slid clear and lurched back to an even deck, and under the impetus of the last revolutions of her engines, drove smoothly ahead in dumb and terror-stricken silence. From the fiddley of the stoke-hold rose a shrill yell of fear, and instantly, as if it had been a signal, a chaos of noise arose from the riven ship. The entrance to the lower decks spouted a rush of screaming, fighting, struggling coolies ; the firemen, nearly naked and black with grimy dust, shot up from below, the deck coolies scuttled up and down the alley-ways and swarmed up on to the piled stacks of pigs, the gamblers and sleepers in the saloon plunged for the door, jambled there and fought and screeched and yelled in the last extremity of fear. Every man of them shouted and jabbered and yelped at the highest pitch of his voice, and, even shriller and sharper than their din, rose the long piercing shrieks of the poisoned pigs.

Can-Do had realised at the first crash the certainty that the ship was done for, and his first thought was for the mate. As he ran to him, the mate sat up and commenced jerkily to rise to his feet, the blood trickling from a cut over his ear where the bullet had scored his head.

'Are you all right ?' shouted Can-Do. 'We're hit bad, aren't we ?'

The mate without answering staggered to the rail and clutched it, and stood a moment looking down on the pandemonium of the decks. He touched the wound with his fingers, shook his head, passed a hand across his brow and drew himself erect.

<sup>1</sup> Copyright in U.S.A., 1924, by Boyd Cable.

'All right,' he said, turning to Can-Do. 'Just scraped me . . . stunned me a second or two . . . all right now. But we're done for. She can't swim many minutes.'

He spun round and reached to the bridge telegraph, and Can-Do saw him wrench the handle round to 'Finished with Engines'; and knew then that their case was hopeless, for that was the final word to the engineers to quit their shut-in pen and take their last chance of life in the open.

The mate stepped back beside him, and together they stood there waiting and watching. The scene below fascinated Can-Do, and presently he caught himself stringing together words and little sentences to fit a written description and convey an impression of it all. He ran over such words as would indicate the babel of noise first—screams, yells, uproar, throat-tearing screeches, agonised squeals, yelps. Then he passed to action and the movements of men, and picked phrases that would describe the scene—brief telephrases sentences to be duly fitted in their proper places at leisure—'a dirt-grimed coolie fireman . . . scrambling over pig-baskets . . . open-mouthed, white teeth and rolling eyes against black face' . . . ; 'a knot of men fighting and climbing to top of deck-house, limbs jerking, arms tossing, white flashes of fluttering clothes' . . . 'two men climb with frantic speed half-way up shrouds . . . hang there jabbering like frightened monkeys . . . race down to the deck again' . . . 'hugging a square lacquered box to his chest with both arms . . . scuttling up and down the pig alley-ways . . . eyes starting from his head . . . trips, falls, scrabbles hastily on hands and knees after box and grabs it again' . . . 'second mate shoots out of the alley, runs a few paces along deck . . . hesitating, wringing his hands, running a step or two this way and that . . . bare feet, white trousers and singlet, glistening white naked arms and neck . . . plunges back into shadow of alley-way like a rabbit into a burrow' . . . 'a clutter of men swarming on top of the deck-house . . . round and on the life-boats . . . fighting . . . tearing at the packed pig-baskets . . . one or two pigs hurled overboard . . . squealing. . . .'

Then suddenly Can-Do realised what he was doing—preparing phrases for a pen that was never to write them. He was wasting time there, precious time, when there was so much to be done. It was a little hard to realise that there was any real danger, the sea looked so smooth and placid and smiling; but its smoothness stretched without a break to the horizon all around them, there

were dozens of men on board . . . and there were four tiny boats. Yes, assuredly there was danger.

The mate put it more strongly when Can-Do shouted something to him about making for a boat.

‘There isn’t a dog’s chance,’ he said composedly. ‘The boats are rotten as punk. Haven’t been off the chocks for years, and they’d fall to pieces if they did get ’em off now. And if they were tight and good . . . look at that mob. They’d drown each other out of any boat that ever swam. The boats wouldn’t hold half of ’em, even if they got them clear. And they can’t. We won’t last more’n two minutes. Look at her head saggin’ now.’

He stopped, took a cigar-case from his pocket, picked a cigar carefully and rolled it in his fingers, bit the end off and felt in his pocket for matches.

Can-Do tried hard to imitate his composure. ‘Then what’s to be done?’ he asked.

‘Done,’ said the mate, and struck a match. ‘Drown!’ He drew on the cigar, puffed it well alight, carefully blew out the match, dropped it, and set his foot on it.

Can-Do laughed at the action. ‘Afraid of settin’ fire to her?’ he said, and the mate grinned back at him.

A sibilant hissing ran in on the other noises of the ship, and a wisp of steam rose and drifted from the opening to the stokehold; it thickened and trailed in a misty cloud across the roof of the house and dimmed the picture of the swarm of coolies clamouring and fighting at the life-boats.

‘Not long now,’ said the mate, puffing at his cigar. ‘That’s the water up to the fires. The boilers’ll go next. Where’s the engineer, I wonder?’

Next instant they saw where the engineer was. Two struggling figures reeled from the darkness of the alley-way, one white-clad and with naked arms and neck, the other in dirty blue dungarees. The dungaree man was hauling the other, squirming like an eel and fighting like a wild animal, along the deck. Then the dungaree man flung the other hastily from him and stood twisting his forearm this way and that and peering at it, while the white man dived back into the alley. The engineer came along the deck and ran up to the bridge to where they stood. ‘That Second o’ yours,’ he said, ‘mad, stark mad he is. Packin’ his box t’ go ashore . . . he bit me . . .’ and he turned the arm for them to see the teeth marks.

'Might's well let him be,' said the mate. 'We're all goin' the same way presently.'

'How long?' asked the engineer, and 'A minute or two,' answered the mate. 'Aye, aye,' the engineer answered, and fell to wiping his hands mechanically on a piece of waste he pulled from his pocket.

'Here,' Can-Do broke in suddenly, 'I don't see this . . . waiting here to be drowned like blind puppies. I'd rather go out fighting for it. Can't the three of us do something to swing one of these boats clear?'

All this time the captain had been lying where the first shock had flung him. His head had struck something evidently, but now he roused enough to drag himself to a sitting position. He asked something in a thick voice and the mate answered him in Dutch. The captain rose and staggered, clutching at the rail and the door frame, into his cabin. The mate sneered. 'Time for one more drink,' he said, and spat disgustedly over the rail.

'Will you two come and help me try to get those boats out?' said Can-Do. 'If we don't get off in 'em ourselves, we might help some of those poor things to do it.'

'I suppose we might as well,' the mate said, and the engineer grunted acquiescence and stowed his waste away in his pocket. 'Though personally, I'd sooner drown here clear o' that scum. By—! They've got one swung out. Lord, I wouldn't have believed it. But look at her planks. They're started already.'

It was true. They could see the black lines where the planks gaped, and even as they watched, the lines widened and the planks bulged outward under the weight on them. Only two or three of the pigs had been torn out and hurled overboard. The weight of the others and the struggling mob of coolies that swarmed on top of them was too much for the rotten wood. Then the boat-falls that held the stern were let go, or cut through, or broke, and the stern fell away and left the boat hanging by the bows, while a torrent of struggling men and screaming pigs cascaded out and splashed down into the water. The white men ran to the end of the bridge and looked. The bow falls were let go and the boat went down with a run and a mighty splash. It began to settle and fill the moment it was afloat, but some of the coolies flung themselves over the ship's side, others clutched the falls and slid down, and the rest rushed across the deck and flung themselves into the crowd that hammered at the chocks of the boat there, and fought for a place, and hampered instead of helped each other in the work.

The boat in the water drifted slowly clear, the centre of a struggling mass of men and animals, her gunwale sunk already almost level with the water. A single heart-rending shriek from the water rose clear above the other clamour of sound. Can-Do clutched the rail, and sick fear stirred at his heart. He saw a black, shining, wet *thing* stab up through the smooth water, and slide swiftly across the surface towards a pig that had drifted clear of the boat, saw a gleaming bluey-white flash for an instant, saw the pig disappear in an agitated little whirlpool. Another long scream came from the knot around the boat, and choked off suddenly in the middle.

Can-Do, white and shaking, moved across the bridge to the other rail.

Then the end came. Suddenly it seemed, and without warning—although that, Can-Do knew, was foolish and fanciful, since they had known from the moment she struck. . . .

But that seemed such an age ago, and the boat had swum so steadily and quietly since, sinking evenly and without fuss, that he had hardly realised to the full that her life and the lives of all her people were measurable by minutes and seconds. Now she lurched and her deck canted sharply to starboard, hurling the men at the port boat down the slope. The shrieks of the pigs, the yells of the men rose in a fresh burst of din, the deck lurched again, the bow sagged and dropped away, and a shattering roar broke from the engine-room. Can-Do saw the roof of the deck-house lift and wrench apart, the ventilators totter and fall, the funnel itself lean and sway. A thick cloud of smoke and steam belched from the wrecked roof, the stern heaved up as the fore part of the ship dived, and Can-Do was torn from his hold on the after rail of the bridge and flung down against the forward one.

He saw the dark bulk of the fore deck and cargo vanish in a swirl of leaping, spouting, frothing white water. The last sight he recollects was a greenish tinged torrent sluicing over it all, and a creaming white wave boiling and seething up at him on the bridge.

Exactly what happened after the *Hai-tan* took her siding plunge to the bottom requires some explanation of her position previous to that moment.

When she first struck the coral reef, her weight and her momentum carried her over it, although the jagged coral split her open along half her length. When she lurched clear, her engines continued their revolutions for a few turns, and helped to drive her

some hundreds of yards clear of where she first struck. The water of course poured in like a mill race, and within bare minutes of her striking she vanished in a cauldron of boiling foam. A few yards below the surface another spike on the edge of the reef caught her after end and held it, while the forward three-quarters of the ship, broken off at the point where the exploding boilers had wrenched and racked her frame, sank in a sucking whirlpool into deep water.

Can-Do was on the bridge, and the bridge was on this deep-diving forward end. The first rush of water broke over the bridge and carried him and the mate and engineer spinning helpless on its crest. The hull plunged on and down, and the three of them were caught in the whirlpool and dragged down with it. Can-Do was a good swimmer and diver, and at the first instant of the plunge had instinctively gulped a long, deep breath. Even in the whirling suction that dragged him down he kept his senses, and the first moment the drag on him slackened he struck out desperately for the surface.

It was a close thing, and his lungs were near bursting point when his head shot up into the sweet air. Even then another little swirl caught him, and, weakened as he was, sucked him under again a dozen feet before it flung him up, gasping and choking, to the surface. He was nearly spent, but he emptied his lungs and filled them in quick deep gulps of the clean fresh air, and swiftly his strength and senses came back to him. The water was still swirling and eddying and belching up gigantic bubbles that burst in little leaping spouts of spray. The surface was dotted thick with bobbing carcasses of pigs, with strips of grass matting, with broken basket work, bamboo sticks, straw hats, jagged scraps of planking, smashed packing cases, yellow gourds, coconuts, strips of cloth—all the riff-raff and rubbish that had lain round the decks of the steamer.

Despairingly Can-Do glanced about him in the hope of finding anything large enough to support him, remembering with a thrill of horror that black fin and the shrieks of the men round the wrecked boat. He twisted round to look for any sign of the boat now, and could hardly believe his eyes when he saw, less than fifty yards away, a smoke-blackened mast-top spiking up out of the water a dozen feet.

It was the top of the mast which still stood on the after part of the ship that the reef had caught and held, and Can-Do struck out for it with renewed hope warming his heart. It was a forlorn

hope and a desperate one certainly—a solitary smooth iron spike sticking up in the middle of a wide, deserted sea. But after the nothingness of the sea and sky and empty horizon, the bare iron spike was a very haven of hope and safety, and he swam for it with a thankful heart. The flag halyards ran to the very top—thin but strong cord whose strength Can-Do tested with a beating heart. They held to the weight he put on them, and he twisted a leg round them, hoisted himself a little out of the water and looked around.

More than a quarter of a mile away he could see the huddle of black heads against the shining water where the coolies still clung about the boat which floated with its gunwale awash. The commotion of the sinking ship and the bursting boilers had evidently scared the sharks, but Can-Do knew—and felt the chill that struck through him at the thought—that they would soon return with scores of others drawn to the orgy of drowned carcasses below him. He hoisted himself clear of the water, and hung there knowing that his strength could not last to hold his weight up long. He must have something else to support him, and his eyes searched amongst the drifting rubbish in the hope of finding something that would be of use to make a platform, or any sort of addition to the thin cord that held him up.

Fifty yards away he saw a square of grating—the close-latticed wooden one that stood on the bridge by the wheel, he took it to be—and with a long look round for any sign of one of those vicious black fins, he commenced to slide down again into the water. But instantly, with his heart in his mouth, he heaved himself frantically clear of the surface again, and the very thing he had dreaded seeing—the cruel curving dorsal fin of a huge shark—swam smoothly past a score of yards away. With the cold sweat starting on his brow Can-Do clung to his support, till a splashing flurry made him turn in time to see a couple of pointed snouts fighting and tugging at the carcass of a drowned pig in its wicker basket. The feast had commenced, and Can-Do pictured to himself the monsters that were glutting their appetites immediately below him.

And then he heard a far-off, feeble hail. His eyes searched the surface, but would have passed the black head a hundred yards away if a tossed arm had not caught his gaze. The man was swimming slowly and in spasmodic jerks, and now, looking close, Can-Do saw it was a white man. The faint hail came again just as he recognised Harden, the mate.

He slid down into the water and struck out in his fastest over-

arm stroke for the black head, sending a loud shout ahead to hearten the swimmer. His scalp prangled at the thought of the sharks he knew were below him, his flesh crept in the expectation of feeling, every stroke he took, the cold touch of a wet skin, the clutch of tearing teeth.

He reached the swimmer at last. Harden was too far spent to do more than gasp, and Can-Do spoke sharply.

'You're all right now, son. I'll have you out o' this in two shakes. Turn on your back and keep yourself stiff and still. . . . That's it. I've got you . . . now, off we go.'

He too turned on his back, pulled the mate's head up till it rested on his waist, and kicked out vigorously. He could have kept afloat like that for hours, but it was desperately slow progress to be making with those brutes thick below him; and he shuddered again at thought of them and clinched his teeth and plodded desperately on, glancing every moment over his shoulder to keep his course straight and to measure the distance to his mast.

And when he reached it at last, he realised with despair that the thin flag halyards could never support the two of them, even if Harden had the strength to hoist himself clear with his, Can-Do's, help. There was nothing else for it but to make the venture again.

'Twine your leg round the line and hold on a second,' he said. 'I'm going to fetch something to hold us up.'

He set his teeth and plunged off again at speed in the direction of the grating, caught it, and, pushing it before him, swam back to the mast. Even then his work was not done. The double length of cord from the mast-head to the water was not enough. They must have more, so 'Have you got a knife?' he asked the mate.

'Yes,' said Harden, 'in my pocket, I think. Wait—yes, here it is.' He pulled an ordinary penknife from his pocket and handed it over. 'We want more rope,' said Can-Do. 'I'm going down to cut it away,' and he opened the knife and put it between his teeth, drew a long breath, ducked under, and hauled himself down the line. He was up again in a few seconds, although to him it seemed an age, and his pulse hammered and his head throbbed as though he had been below to the limit of a diver's endurance.

'Dash me if I'd ha' cared about goin' down like that,' said Harden. 'There might easy be sharks down there.'

'Might be,' said Can-Do, and laughed a trifle hysterically. 'Man, it's fair crawlin' wi' the brutes. See there,' and he pointed to a couple of the sliding black fins.

‘We got to get out o’ this pretty middlin’ lively,’ said the mate hurriedly. ‘My toes don’t feel comfortable in this water.’

Working in desperate haste, they passed the line’s end down and up again through the grating edge, hauled on the free end till it was taut, cut it there, shinned up the pole and rove the second line through, and made an end fast to the opposite edge of the grating. They hoisted their tiny platform—it was just big enough to hold the two of them—clear of the water and up to within a few feet of the mast-head. The mate climbed the mast again, and using the free trailing ends of the lines lashed the platform securely. Then Can-Do swarmed up, and sank weakly on their perch, his limbs shaking and his brain swimming.

‘We’re in a hole,’ said the mate. ‘But we might be in a worse, or inside a shark. I’ve got to thank you for bein’ where I am now, and I know it.’ He held out his hand and took Can-Do’s and shook it. ‘Man alive,’ he said, ‘you’re shakin’ through an’ through . . . and you look fair played out.’

‘I *am* played out,’ said Can-Do faintly. ‘It’s near sundown now, and I haven’t slept since yesterday morning. My nerve’s been on the stretch for forty-eight hours, an’ I don’t hardly blame it for getting the jumps. And those sharks just about finished it. Look !’

For a couple of acres round the mast, the surface of the water was criss-crossed with sliding black fins, and here and there two or three monsters tore and ravened at a basket-enclosed carcass. The green of water below them was streaked and tinged with pink, and its surface littered with torn and broken pig-baskets, some of them still clinging round scraps of mangled flesh.

A black carcass swirled to the surface and the two men peered down in fascinated silence at the rush of a grey head with cruel cold eyes and flashing rows of teeth. Even as the jaws closed, another black fin sliced through the water and a second monster snapped at the morsel. They wrenching and worried at it exactly like two angry dogs over a bone, and when one tore away with it, swimming with his head turned from his rival, the other followed in swift sliding rushes, striving to come up and snatch at the food before the last of it vanished. Then the knife-like fins sank from sight, and the two men looked at each other and shuddered.

‘We weren’t out any too soon o’ that,’ said the mate grimly. ‘An’ we’ll have half the sharks in the Indian Ocean round here for breakfast. But I think you ought to try’n curl up and get a snatch

'o' sleep, lad. I can sit along the edge all right for a bit, and I'll take first watch. I'd have been keeping two four-hour watches to-night if the old *Hai-tan* had been afloat, and I'm used to it. So get down to it.'

Can-Do was too utterly worn out to refuse the offer. He curled up with his head on the mate's knee, and in a short minute was in the deep dreamless sleep of utter exhaustion. The sun dropped and the darkness swooped down on them; the moon rose and swam across the sky, and curved down and out of sight again, the dawn wind stirred and breathed cool on them, and the grey of daylight gave place suddenly to the blazing glory of the rising sun. But Can-Do knew none of it. He slept on and on, unconsciously stretching a stiffened limb and changing a cramped position, but never waking. The mate moved several times and lifted the head on his knee to a fresh place, but Can-Do knew nothing of it.

The mate drowsed in snatches. He undid his belt and passed it outside one of the ropes supporting the corner of the platform, and buckled it round his waist, and drowsed and waked and drowsed again. And always when he waked it was to hear the scuffling splashes in the water round and under him, to see the smoky flame of phosphorescent water trailing after the tigerish shapes that came and went unceasingly.

When the day came the mate ran his eye round the horizon with scant hope of seeing anything to break its line. To his surprise he saw, less than half a mile off, the boat that had been launched from the *Hai-tan*. The men that had clustered thick about her and clung to the gunwale were gone, and the mate, remembering those shapes moving beneath him all night, understood. There were still four or five men in the boat, lying almost at full length in the water inside her so as to let the water bear some of their weight and save her sinking deeper. One man had a piece of flat board and used it as a paddle, and the mate could see that the boat was slowly creeping towards where the mast sticking up from the water offered the survivors another slim hope of life.

They were making painfully slow progress, and an hour later had barely covered a quarter of a mile, or half the distance. The mate reckoned that the current or the tide must be setting them towards the south, and he began to figure on their chances of making the mainland if they turned and paddled with the current.

One of the men lying in the bottom of the boat reached his arm over the side and began to paddle with his hand, and presently

another on the other side followed suit. Just astern of the boat the mate saw a black speck rise. Before he could clear his throat to shout, the boat rocked violently, and the man with the paddling arm half rose and jerked towards the gunwale. The other men raised themselves, and their weight sank the boat still lower. The mate heaved himself to his feet and at the pitch of his voice yelled an order to sit down, sit down . . . the figures struggled and rocked . . . another black dot rose and slid towards the boat. . . .

‘She’s over,’ groaned the mate. ‘My God—she’s over,’ and hid his eyes from the sight of the scattered black specks that streaked in converging, arrow-straight lines towards the boat, and tried to shut his ears. . . .

‘What is it?’ Can-Do had asked drowsily at his first shout. ‘What’s the row?’ but he lay still a moment till the mate’s groaning exclamation broke out.

‘What was that?’ he asked then, sitting up. ‘I thought I heard one of those dash pigs squeal again. Must have been dreaming.’

‘Yes,’ said the mate. ‘You must have been dreaming. I haven’t heard squeals from any—pig. There isn’t any pig alive within a hundred mile o’ us. Or anything else,’ he added after listening for any further sound, ‘except sharks.’

‘Plenty of them,’ said Can-Do. ‘Remember those two brutes under there last night worrying at that—’

‘Don’t,’ the mate interrupted him. ‘I don’t just care to think about it now.’

They sat in silence for a time, while the sun climbed higher, and its heat began to touch them with flame.

‘Harden,’ said Can-Do quietly, ‘it’s all been rather a waste of energy, hasn’t it? I didn’t think of it yesterday when we were working with our hearts in our mouths and all our nerves in our heels trailing in the water there—as mine were anyway. But all I was thinking of was getting up here out of reach of those teeth. And now we’re here—what’s the good of it? If the thirst doesn’t get its hooks deep enough to-day, it will to-morrow. Are we in the track of any steamers here?’

‘No,’ said the mate. ‘Not if we’re where I reckon, and that’s somewhere on an outlying reef o’ the Karimoondawas. That’s miles off our course—and the Second has paid for his carelessness anyway.’

‘You won’t be missed for days, of course?’ said Can-Do.

'Not till we're due in Singapore, and don't turn up. We'll be past carin' whether we're missed or no by then,' answered the mate.

They dropped into silence again, and Can-Do into miserable reflections of his fate. It was not the dying he was worrying over, even although he was full possessed of a young and fit man's healthy desire to live; he had come near death too often to shirk looking it in the face, and he had scraped through often enough and barely enough to be ready to take philosophically the slender chance that might be left of life and of being picked up before it was too late.

But what was hurting him was that he had failed, after all his efforts, in getting to Singapore by the twenty-fifth, that he was letting his firm down, that his firm and his girl might never even know how or why he had failed. He had always prided himself on pulling off what he set out to do—that is, if it was to be done—'Can do'; and now, at the crisis of his life, he had failed.

'Maybe it's as well you should know,' said Harden, breaking in on his thoughts. 'I hardly think there's a chance of lasting the day out. This is the first of the spring tides. It rose to six inches from the gratin' last night while you slept; it'll likely be over the tip o' the mast-head on the next tide.'

'And the next tide?' asked Can-Do. 'What time?'

'It's just turned,' said Harden. 'It's rising now.'

A black shining triangle slid slowly past under their feet.

On the sea there are many matters of life and death which hang on the turn of a wrist, the movement of a head, the lifting of an eye. A steersman moves a wheel no bigger than a bicycle's, a few spokes to his right—and the ship with her burden of living souls slides past, a bare yard clear of an obstacle that would tear her heart out. He turns it to the left as many spokes—and the papers ashore flare with screaming headlines of 'Another Shocking Disaster!' An oiler edging along a two-foot-wide grating slips a boot-heel on a piece of greasy waste. His head jerks a foot backwards, a ponderous mass of shining, polished metal whirls past, eighteen inches from his face—and he goes whistling about his job. Or his head jerks the same distance forward—and he works no more. An officer on the bridge lifts his eyes to the horizon. . . .

The liner's watch officer was just on the point of running down to have a look at the chart, and, with his foot on the ladder, he lifted his eyes and swept a last look round the horizon. His foot stayed on the first step and his gaze remained fixed for some seconds. He

turned back and lifted a pair of binoculars from their box, adjusted them, and looked long and close at the black object that had caught his first glance.

‘Port your helm a couple of points,’ he said to the man at the wheel. ‘Port the helm couple o’ points,’ repeated the wheel and twirled the spokes with his eyes on the compass card. ‘Steady,’ said the officer, with the glasses still to his eyes. ‘Steady it is,’ answered the wheel. The officer took a whistle from his pocket and blew sharply on it. A man leaped from the door of the fo’c’sl and ran aft along the fore deck. ‘Go and ask the captain will he kindly step on deck a minute,’ the officer shouted down, and the man ran on. The captain was asleep when the man tapped at his door; but he was on the bridge well within fifteen seconds after the tap. Captains are not usually asked to step up on the bridge, no matter how politely, without there being something of moment toward; and it is always well to save odd seconds in finding out just what that something is.

The mate pointed to the object that had been black against the light on the water, but now, as they approached, showed a dirty white. ‘I’ve been passing scraps of stuff for half an hour back, sir,’ said the officer, ‘broken wickerwork baskets, and a straw hat, and then a ship’s bucket. I thought you’d like to have a look at this.’

Now any one of these things is common flotsam on the open sea, and would call for no comment. You might pass one to-day and another a year hence and another in the next hemisphere and nobody would think it worth mention. But when you pass all three within half an hour—there is like to be an extra lookout set. And it may even be that those pitiful scraps of gear and personal belongings will figure conspicuously in the ship’s log, and in long and expensive cables, and in official reports at Lloyd’s.

The last floating object was an unmistakable piece of wreckage—the *Hai-tan*’s boat floating bottom up and with no more than two or three of her bottom boards showing. The two on the bridge examined it closely as they slid past; and there was an anxious consultation, and much examination of charts and talk of local currents’ directions and set.

‘Smooth water and clear weather for weeks past,’ said the captain. ‘That means only one thing. She’s gone off her course and piled up somewhere—hereabouts, as I reckon it,’ and he set his finger on the spot on the chart.

The ship's course was altered and she steamed steadily on with an extra hand posted high on the foremast. They picked up some more wreckage to tell them they were on the right road, and then an excited hail from the lookout and a pointed arm sent the mate running along the deck and nimbly up the shrouds with his binoculars in his pocket.

'Spar of some sort, sir,' he shouted down to the bridge a moment later. 'Two men on it, and one of them waving to us. Port a trifle, sir . . . steady . . . as she goes.'

Then Can-Do and Harden, with the grating hoisted to its highest possible point, the water lapping a foot below their soles, and those ominous fins doing patient sentry-go around them, saw a jet of white steam puff from the steamer's whistle, and thin and vanish in the hot air long before the hoot reached them.

The mate leaned out and shook his fist at the slow circling fins and whispered hoarsely, 'Not this time—blast you!' and straightened himself to watch the steamer looming nearer and nearer, till they could see the leadsmen taking cautious soundings, the boat swung out and dropped into the water.

'What ship d'you reckon she is,' croaked Can-Do, trying to wet his dry lips with a dryer tongue. 'And where bound?'

'She might be the *Vandyk* bound for Singapore,' said the mate, 'Or, no—more likely to be her sister ship, the *Van Dieman*, for Australia. It's nearer her course, although even she's a lump off it.'

Can-Do groaned, and Harden glanced at him in surprise.

'You don't seem as pleased about it as I'd expect,' he said. 'What in flames does it matter where she's bound, so long's she takes us there out o' this?'

'Matter?' said Can-Do bitterly. 'It matters so much to me I'd almost as lief stay here if I thought the *Vandyk* for Singapore had a chance of coming this way.'

The mate began to wonder a little whether the sun hadn't been too much for him after all; he was just about sure of it when he saw Can-Do strain forward with his eye fixed on the bow of the approaching boat, and as he read on it the name *Vandyk*, turned and gripped the mate's hand, croaked a hoarse whoop of joy and exclaimed :

'Can-do, can-do! I win yet; Singapore by the twenty-fifth—the game—my girl. . . . Can-do!'

*LESLIE STEPHEN: 'SOME EARLY IMPRESSIONS.'*<sup>1</sup>

It is but natural piety that the CORNHILL should enlarge upon these recollections of his working life set down by Leslie Stephen, its distinguished editor of fifty years since. A curious appropriateness marked his editorship, for he was the son-in-law of Thackeray, our first editor, as well as being himself a prince of literary essayists.

But it was not through this connexion that the succession fell to him. He came to the CORNHILL by the road of journalism. He had had a successful career at Cambridge; had been fellow and tutor of Trinity Hall for some ten years, and, after the custom of College fellows in the 'fifties, had taken orders under the influence of F. D. Maurice, whose metaphysics promised to resolve the doctrinal difficulties he had already felt. But logical subtleties wore thin, and with the publication of 'Essays and Reviews' and the 'Origin of Species' doubt loomed larger. Unable to come to terms with the Thirty-nine Articles, Leslie Stephen resigned his orders, left Cambridge, and came up to London in 1864. Like his brother, Fitzjames Stephen, he wrote regularly for the *Saturday Review*, and when in the following year George Smith, who had already founded the CORNHILL, launched the *Pall Mall Gazette*, both brothers wrote for the new journal, the proprietor of which, in Stephen's words,

'was a man under whom it was a pleasure to serve. He encouraged me with a cordiality for which I shall always be grateful; and had a cheering confidence in his contributors and a belief in the goodness of their work.'

Thus work in the *Pall Mall Gazette* made Stephen acquainted with George Smith,

'and the acquaintance soon ripened into one of the most valuable friendships of my life. He had in the highest degree some of the qualities which one desires in a friend. He was the staunchest, most straightforward, and heartiest of men; pugnacious enough to be a "good hater," but the best of backers to

<sup>1</sup> *Some Early Impressions*, by Leslie Stephen. (Hogarth Press. 7s. 6d. net.) These reminiscences were written in 1903, and appeared in the *National Review* in that year. They have never since been republished.

those whom he really loved. Plunged into business at the age of fourteen, he had little chance of a literary education, and he was ever afterwards engaged in a variety of commercial enterprises which might well have absorbed his energies. But he had from the first a keen interest in literature, and became the publisher and friend of a remarkable number of eminent writers. . . . Few of his authors failed to become his personal friends. Miss Brontë (who, I need hardly say, was discovered by Smith and his reader, Mr. Williams) drew his portrait in the Dr. John of "Villette." It has not the minute fidelity of some of her sketches ; but gives a characteristic sketch of the impression made upon her by the masterful and chivalrous young man. He is so genuine that the poor governess, herself in the shade, is cheered instead of depressed by the sunlight of success which seems appropriate to him. . . . With no one had he more cordial relations than with Thackeray during the last ten years of the novelist's life ; and Thackeray's children, then and afterwards, felt Smith's friendship to be a most valuable possession.'

Thus, when the editorial triumvirate, headed by Smith himself, which for some time had been running the *CORNHILL*, came to an end with the retirement of Dutton Cook, Stephen gladly accepted the offer of the sole editorship from his far-seeing friend. Here he was well able to fulfil 'certain ambitions to make a few remarks in his own person' and to escape the worst pressure of journalism, for 'the kind of superficial omniscience demanded from the journalist becomes in the long run rather distracting.' During the eleven years that he guided the *CORNHILL*, from 1871 to 1882, he left his mark both in the magazine itself and in the larger world of letters through many admirably written essays, and especially in the series called '*Hours in a Library*', republished in book form. Of this most successful part of his work he speaks with characteristic modesty : 'My editorial duties,' he remarks, 'gave me leisure to write a book or two (of which I need say nothing).'

Others may be allowed to recall the clarity and concision of his style, and to realise that in all he wrote he never fell below his exigent standard of criticism that sifted the good from the mediocre. For if he refused to father the opinion attributed to him by a friend, that on the whole books ought not to be written, he was at least inclined to extend the familiar condemnation of mediocre poetry to mediocrity in every branch of literature. 'I often think,' he exclaimed, 'that the value of second-rate literature is not small, but simply zero.'

He succeeded in making his regime a period of rare literary brilliance. In pure letters and literary criticism he gave of the best himself, and rallied round him essayists of the best from Symonds and Stevenson, Andrew Lang and Grant Allen, to Sir Sidney Colvin and Mr. Edmund Gosse, who still maintain his high tradition of letters. The CORNHILL was not changed in kind, though heightened in quality.

'One great advantage of the "Cornhill,"' he writes, 'was that George Smith, already a valued friend, was the most considerate of proprietors, and treated me with, if anything, an excess of confidence. Otherwise, perhaps, I might have been less content to stick in the old ruts. The brilliant youth of the periodical was over; it had rivals, and as we kept pretty much to our traditions we did not dazzle the world by any new sensation.'

His reflections on the work of an editor are very true, and illustrate some of the troubles which perennially beset the path of the conscientious editor, although for his own part he 'found the duties pleasant enough.'

'My great predecessor, Thackeray, has left a record of the "thorns in his cushion." His kindly and sensitive nature suffered from the necessity of rejecting would-be contributors who had no other qualification than pressing need for remuneration. No man, indeed, who is not a brute, can fail to be pained by some of the facts that come to his notice—the struggles of the waifs and strays who are trying to keep themselves afloat by such very inadequate lifebuoys as unsaleable articles. I could comfort myself sufficiently by a very simple consideration. I had only a fixed number of pages at my disposal, and to accept one writer was therefore to reject another. It was clearly my duty to take the best article offered, and not to distribute charity at the cost of the magazine and its proprietor.'

This is a consideration which still applies inexorably, for the tribe of those who demand consideration on other than literary grounds is far from extinct. Nor is the next experience of fifty years ago less typical of the present.

'In other respects I had no cause for complaining of my contributors. They were (except, of course, the poets) more reasonable than I expected. I had (also, of course) one or two of the typical forms of perversity. There was the young man (he might have come straight out of the *Dunciad*) who was aggrieved because

I could not advise him to give up a partnership in a good business in order to adopt a literary career ; and attributed my rejection of his five-act tragedy to my jealousy of his anticipated success. I had a difficulty of that kind from a rather curious cause. Gladstone, in the midst of his multitudinous occupations, found time to read minor poets and to applaud them with characteristic warmth. One or two of these came to me with heads turned by such praises, and thought me painfully cold in comparison. I might have reminded them of Blackwood's very sensible remark, when Lewes complained of strictures upon George Eliot's first story, that critics who had to act upon their judgment were naturally more guarded than irresponsible eulogists who need only consult their good nature.'

It was, I think, after Stephen's time that a certain aspiring poet sent back the very liberal cheque offered in payment for his contribution because he had heard that the Poet Laureate had received payment on a yet more liberal scale, elsewhere, indeed, than in the *CORNHILL*. But he was pacified, and pocketed both the cheque and the imaginary wound to his pride, on being told that A and B and C, all dwelling on the highest peaks of Parnassus, were perfectly satisfied with similar payments.

Stephen does not record, though I suspect it must have been current in his time, the peculiarly offensive reason given by some for not submitting their work frankly, namely, that the editor was capable of rejecting the paper, while stealing the material for his own use. True, there are rogues in the lower strata of all the professions, in law and medicine as well as in letters ; but such a method of approach does not conciliate the average editor nor open the prospect of pleasant relations with the contributor.

Again, it is no less true to-day than in Stephen's time that 'an editor, though authors sometimes forget the fact, is always in a state of eagerness for the discovery of the coming man (or woman). In spite of many disappointments, I would take up manuscript after manuscript with a vague flutter of hope that it might be a new "*Jane Eyre*" or "*Scenes of Clerical Life*," destined to lift some obscure name to the heights of celebrity. The delight never presented itself ; and yet I do not know that I ever rejected an angel unawares. Had I done so, I should only have been treading in the steps of men more sagacious in gauging aptitude for success. I do not fancy myself to be a good judge of the public taste. I have never clearly discovered what it is that attracts the average reader. Many popular authors would suffer considerably, and at

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least one obscure writer would gain, if everybody took my view of their merits. I believe not the less in the *vox populi*. Books succeed, I hold, because they ought to succeed. A critic has no business to assume that taste is bad because he does not share it. His business is to accept the fact and try to discover the qualities to which it is due. Sometimes, of course, an ephemeral success may be won by rubbish; the preacher may please the audience, as Charles II shrewdly observed, because his nonsense suits their nonsense; but it is idle to condemn lasting popularity. . . . But anticipation, not explanation, of the ultimate verdict is the difficult problem which an editor has to solve.'

Yet if he could not claim to have discovered any new star of the first magnitude, he lent a helping hand, not without grateful acknowledgment, to such rising lights as John Addington Symonds, R. L. Stevenson, Henry James, Thomas Hardy, Grant Allen. At all events, in his day he could plead that the chances of making such discovery were small.

'The regular contributors to reviews seemed to me to be a small class, like the proverbial stage army which is multiplied by walking round and round. Anyone who could reach the regular standard could get admission to the ranks, and so many editors were lying in wait that one's chance of first catching the early worm was small.'

This is not precisely the case to-day. Writers have multiplied a hundredfold, and the number whose writing possesses the charm of style is considerable. A large proportion of them do not write for their living, but as a secondary labour, as the spirit moves them. The regular 'stage army' no doubt continues its recurrent march across the stage and round again, but they are flanked by a larger army in less regular formation. Where space is limited, the question is not only of choosing the best, but even of finding room for the good. And this all the more because the literary rivals whom Stephen found on the alert to pick up his early worms have passed away, crushed by the competition of another type of periodical. Essayists shine over a limited field; and the serial habit is not what it was. Rising stars kindle their popular fire by their books, and command a serial later, or supply short stories and criticisms on the strength of their fame.

Among other points noted by Stephen there is the growing cult of respectability in the mid-Victorian periodicals. This appeared, on the one hand, in a reluctance to publish anything that

would shock their respectable public ; a reluctance which cut short Ruskin's 'Unto this Last' in the CORNHILL and later, even in *Fraser's Magazine* under the regime of his friend and fellow-Carlylean, Froude. On the other hand, it became respectable to write under one's own name in periodicals, especially after the *Fortnightly Review*, which was started in 1865 and was soon to win success with John Morley for editor, adopted the Positivist principle laid down by Comte, forbidding anonymous writing. Periodicals gained by receiving contributions into which the best writers have put their best work, unhampered by the platform of the party to whose organ he is contributing. The man who writes under his own name takes the main responsibility ; his editor only vouches for the readability of the article. Yet while praising the principle he was keenly aware of the spiritual dangers in self-consciousness and vanity often involved ; and speaking of the man who helps to maintain a wholesome tone in the newspaper press and so does good service, he adds : 'Perhaps he may give thanks that his anonymity saves him from some of the temptations which have weakened the moral fibre and injured the work of so many men of letters who do not wear the mask.'

One more criticism applied to the 'distinguished editor' of *Fraser*, which was beginning to lose its position.

'Froude, one would have thought, should be a model editor. Nobody could write more charming periodical essays, as he showed in his "Short Studies" ; no one could be more charming personally or have a finer literary taste. He had, I think, one weakness as editor. He had not discovered, what I take to be true, that, in judging an article, first thoughts are quite as likely to be right as second or third. It is best to decide at once and put your contributors out of pain—whereas Froude would oscillate long between Yes and No, from conscientiousness or, perhaps, from a certain timidity.'

So much for the sidelights thrown by these reminiscences upon Stephen's own method of work, which has a particular interest for the CORNHILL. It is but one special facet among varied impressions—of Cambridge life in the 'fifties and the contrast between the prosaic practicality of his own university amid its sober levels and the religious and romantic enthusiasms of Oxford with its picturesque setting. With a sly touch of humour he remarks :

'We boast, indeed, of our poets at Cambridge ; but if, for some mysterious reason, we have been more prolific in poets than Oxford, it is hardly because we have provided them with a more congenial atmosphere. They thrive best, perhaps, in a bracing climate. A Cambridge career induced Coleridge to become a heavy dragoon ; Byron kept a bear to set a model of manners to the dons of his day ; and the one service which the place did for Wordsworth was to enable him for once in his life to drink a little more than was consistent with perfect command of his legs.'

But the very absence of any prophet, such as Newman, is noted as one of the great advantages of Cambridge : 'Spiritual guides are very impressive but sometimes very mischievous persons. Prostration before a prophet is enfeebling,' even if the prophet be an Arnold and the devotee a Clough.

There are stories of fossilised dons, like the King Log, of whom a Fellow of his college remarked, 'Our master is intellectually an idiot, socially a snob, and physically dirty ; but otherwise unobjectionable' ; of the professor, one of whose lectures on the French Revolution, a hardy annual, always drew an audience, 'because it was known from previous experience that in the course of it he would burst into tears upon mentioning the melancholy fate of Marie Antoinette' ; of the ideal tutor's career exemplified by Todhunter ; of Whewell and the great work he did as Master of Trinity ; of the 'Apostles' ; of Tennyson and his friends ; of Mill, whose logical thought lent him an inspiration ; of the Maurice-Kingsley circle and muscular Christianity quaintly exemplified in a photograph wherein Maurice appeared taking the arm of Tom Hughes :—

'Hughes was turning a reverential glance to his master and at the same time looking from the corner of his eye with an obvious wish that some caviller would try to punch the prophet's head and require a lesson from a practical expert in the art of fisticuffs.'

Nor are all the reminiscences of his early days. They bring us down to Matthew Arnold and the Darwinian men of science and Darwin himself, whom he used to visit when on his famous Sunday tramps. Darwin, whose simplicity in greatness makes him exclaim :

'I could sympathise with the young German who burst into tears on leaving the house, touched by contrast between the famous thinker and the sweet-natured, quiet country gentleman, so free from the pedantry which sometimes haunts the professor's chair.'

One may conclude by quoting from Stephen's description of his sometimes alarming meetings with Carlyle, the 'grand old Diogenes,' whose fundamental lines of thought were so different from his own, yet who remained to him the most interesting of all the eminent men whom he had seen.

'My alarm was due partly, let us hope, to the natural modesty of a young author in the presence of a great veteran, and partly to a lurking fear of probable disapproval. I might at some rash moment let out that I had leanings towards the pig philosophy and even some belief in the "dismal science." I felt something like the editor of a Sadducees' gazette in reviewing St. John the Baptist. I was not less impressed than a true disciple by the personal dignity of the man. When, indeed, the old gentleman got on to his high horse of declamation and insisted upon the vitality and the ubiquity of the devil in modern times, one could only "lie low" and let the thunder pass over one's head. No man above seventy—as I now hold still more strongly—should ever be contradicted. It was something, too, as many hearers have remarked, to hear the rare but hearty laugh—reminding one of Johnson's "rhinoceros" explosions, which showed that the humorist could be conscious of his own extravagances. But he was more attractive in the vein represented by the inimitable life of Sterling and the pathetic passages in the "Reminiscences." The unequalled power of graphic portraiture and the profound tenderness for the old days were not marred—so far as I ever heard—by those petulant outbreaks which would have been excised from the posthumous book if his directions had been obeyed, and which gave to the respectable world an impression of sardonic misanthropy. One cannot indeed expect a John the Baptist to adopt the orthodox tone about the popular idols whom it was his special function to denounce. He did in all seriousness think many people fools, though when he asserted that Newman had the brains of a moderate-sized rabbit he was not pronouncing a reasoned judgement. But one went to Carlyle to be roused—not to get cool scientific formulas, and so rare a phenomenon as a prophet-humorist must be taken on his own ground. Of this, however, enough has been said, and I will only add that I never had to complain of roughness, even such as Johnson bestowed upon Boswell.'

L. H.

## THE CHINO-IRISH SEALS : A MINOR MYSTERY.

BY LIEUT.-COLONEL G. R. B. SPAIN, C.M.G., F.S.A.

IRELAND is a country of many problems ; a land of beauty and sorrow, of political strife, of religious and racial hatreds. But apart from these things the island is the home of a number of unsolved archaeological puzzles, and not the least of these is the mystery of the Chino-Irish seals—a minor antiquarian enigma of such a curious and unusual type as to make the whole question and details worthy of recapitulation for the benefit of the present year of grace.

About the year 1780 a turf cutter was cutting peats for fuel in a bog near the town of Mountrath, in Queen's County, Ireland, when he found a small image of an ape, or baboon, seated on a rectangular base about the size of an ordinary gaming dice cube, the whole being  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches in height, and composed of a pure white porcelain. On the bottom of the square base was a series of designs or symbols. The man, realising that the object had an interest, presented it to his master, Captain Cashin, who happened to be present, and that gentleman in his turn gave the figure to the Rev. Doctor Beaufort. The image was in the possession of Miss Louisa C. Beaufort of Hatch Street, Dublin, in 1850. In the year 1793 an antiquarian publication called *Anthologia Hibernica* engraved a plate in its first volume of miscellaneous antiquities found in Ireland. Amid a group of various objects is a drawing of an impression from a square-shaped seal showing symbols of a kind very like those on the base of the Mountrath figure, but of a different grouping. There are no details in the text. It was by no means unusual for the publishers of antiquarian books in the eighteenth century to produce engraved plates of various relics without giving any further information in the text of the volumes—a practice rather maddening to a later searcher for knowledge, but otherwise harmless. But this apparent record of a second find was followed by others. About the year 1805 a Mr. T. Crofton Croker found in a cave near the mouth of Cork Harbour, on the coast at Myrtleville, a similar image of a seated ape, or baboon, in white porcelain, and on the bottom of the base

was a series of symbols of the same type as the Mountrath find and the plate in the first volume of the *Anthologia Hibernica*, but entirely different in grouping and general design. In 1810 some men were digging up the roots of an old pear-tree in the orchard of Mr. James Christy of Kirkcassock, Co. Down, when a similar porcelain figure of the seated ape was turned up by the workers. In 1816 a Mr. Thomas Singleton found a fifth of these objects at Clonliffe Parade, near the Circular Road, Dublin; another was found while ploughing a field near Burrisokane, County of Tipperary, in 1832; a seventh was found in the bed of the river Boyne near Clonard, in the County of Meath, in digging gravel; and finally another was discovered in 1838 at Killead, Co. Down.

These various discoveries interested Mr. Joseph Huband Smith, of Dublin, a learned gentleman who had given much attention to Irish antiquities, and he set about collecting details of still further finds of these strange little objects in Ireland. In this pursuit he seems to have been joined by Mr. Joseph William Murphy, of Belfast, and these gentlemen, on comparing notes, found that the figures were apparently from a similar mould, or type of mould; that they were all composed of a hard, vitrified porcelain, and it was recognised that the bases were probably used for impressing seals in wax, clay, or kindred substances. The designs on the bases were next subjected to a careful scrutiny by these two antiquaries, and they came to the conclusion that the symbols had a distinctly Chinese appearance. On December 9, 1839, Mr. Smith read a paper to the Royal Irish Academy on the subject, detailing the discovery of nearly a dozen of the ape-like images, and claiming that the script on their bases was of a Chinese type. Mr. Smith exhibited one of the figures and impressions in sealing-wax from the bases of several others; he stated that the seals were all uniform, consisting of an exact cube and having by way of a handle a seated baboon, or ape. The seals were so practically similar in size and general appearance as to be indistinguishable, except by the characters on the under face. Mr. Smith claimed that, owing to the extreme degree of heat the figures had been subjected to, and the consequent vitrification of the material, they were quite capable of resisting the attacks of time for an indefinite period beneath the soil, and he suggested that the seals had arrived in Ireland from the East, with weapons and other articles of commerce brought by the Phoenicians in their ships. He thought that the seal finds in Ireland might be compared to

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the discovery of Chinese vases in the tombs of Egypt by Rosellini, Lord Prudhoe, and others, and he stated that at least seven Oriental vases had been found at Coptos and Thebes with inscriptions on them in Chinese characters ; these graphs had been translated by Chinese experts to mean 'The flower opens, and lo ! another year.' He claimed from this that the trade of China with distant countries at a period of remote antiquity was clearly proved, and he submitted to the Irish Academy that a case of strong probability had been made out in favour of the porcelain seals having found their way into Ireland at a very ancient date.

This suggestion was severely criticised, and Sir J. Francis Davis pointed out that the Chinese script on the Egyptian discoveries was not of a particularly early date. The vases in Egypt might have arrived during the Moslem invasion of the Nile valley. An acrimonious correspondence was carried on for some time in the *Athenaeum* and the *London and Edinburgh Philosophical Magazine*, during 1840.

A Mr. Hyndman produced one of the porcelain seals at a meeting of the Belfast Natural History and Philosophical Society on December 16, 1841, after a lecture on Babylonian inscriptions by a Mr. Isaac Cullimore. Mr. Edmund Getty of Belfast claimed that the script on the base of the seal represented a written character, and probably had a meaning, but his views were generally opposed by the members present who took part in the discussion.

About 1843 Mr. Getty was in touch with a naturalist, Mr. William Ogilby, regarding the seated animal of the seals. Mr. Ogilby agreed that the ape-like beasts had been modelled from a Chinese monkey—that is to say, the workman artist who had manufactured the figurines had seen a Chinese monkey and had made the form in the same shape.

Until Mr. Getty claimed the seal impressions as written characters, with an actual meaning in Chinese, it does not seem to have occurred to any of the Irish antiquaries to have a series of impressions submitted to an Oriental expert ; but this was probably due to the violent opposition to the theory, and to the remarks of Sir J. F. Davis, who had said that the marks on the bases of the figures did not admit of translation. About the year 1843 Mr. Getty seems to have joined forces with the Mr. J. W. Murphy of Belfast already mentioned, and the two antiquaries actively pursued their endeavours to obtain records and impressions in wax from every known ape seal found in Ireland. By 1844 they

had acquired twenty-six impressions of different seals, several of which were similar, though from different find spots.

Furnished with the impressions and numbering them 1 to 26, Mr. Getty endeavoured to find an Oriental expert with sufficient knowledge of the subject to translate and, if possible, date the seal characters. The appointment of his friend, Mr. J. G. Comelate, to a Government position in Hong Kong gave him an opportunity of carrying his inquiry into the Celestial Empire itself. Soon after the arrival of Mr. Comelate in China, that gentleman, stimulated by Mr. Getty, made a series of inquiries and exhibited an impression from the best matrix in the Irish series (No. 3) to several persons who would be likely to be qualified to give an answer and furnish the data required.

Mr. Gutzlaff, the Chinese secretary to the Government at Hong Kong, assisted Mr. Comelate in his efforts, and eventually a learned Chinese examined the impression. 'They are Chinese seal characters,' said the Oriental professor, 'namely, only used for seals in China, particularly in old times. These characters differ from those commonly used in modern Chinese, either in writing or printing.' Apparently it was beyond the erudition of the Oriental to attempt to translate the seal script. However, very shortly after this episode, Mr. Gutzlaff was in touch with a distinguished Chinese scholar of Nankin, who translated the impression as 'Water by the running appear stones!' Interesting, even if slightly incoherent to Europeans, as it showed that the seal No. 3 was inscribed with writing intelligible to the Chinese.

Mr. Comelate communicated the news to Mr. Getty in Belfast, and the news so interested Mr. Getty that he determined to obtain further information. With the object of procuring more satisfactory results, he seems to have prepared two complete sets of impressions from the twenty-six seals, numbering them as before (1 to 26), and sent them out to Hong Kong to Mr. Comelate, with the request that the two duplicate series be submitted to two entirely different groups of Chinese scholars.

Mr. Getty's object obviously was to obtain two sets of translations without collusion, the one set being a check upon the other, so that if the translations of the two sets showed, in any numbered case, a similarity of ideas, it would prove certainly that the seal impressions were at least Chinese in origin, even if it did not prove them to be very ancient. After a long, early Victorian voyage to the East, one series was duly submitted by

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Mr. Comelate to Mr. Gutzlaff and his Nankin friends, and the other was sent to Chinese experts in Shanghai to decipher.

The two sets of impressions from the seals seem to have caused considerable interest to the intellectual Chinese who saw them; these people would not believe that the original seals had been found in Ireland, because seals of the type were traditionally considered to be of great family interest in China, and because of their conventional association with ancestor worship. According to Mr. Gutzlaff's friends, the seal script seems to have been invented and in use about the time of Confucius, 500 B.C., and it was used as a special graph. Although many intelligent Chinese were aware of the seal script, only the more learned scholars could translate the characters and further explain the meaning bound up with them. Owing to the slow intercommunication with China, it was towards the end of 1846 that Mr. Getty received the two sets of translations from Hong Kong, with a letter from Mr. Comelate advising him that the problem had given his Oriental friends more trouble than anything they had ever attempted.

The two series of translations are here set out side by side for comparison :

### MR. GUTZLAFF'S GROUP.

1. To sing about the Wind and handle the Moon.
2. Sealed (as No. 26).
3. As soon as the Water falls the Rocks appear.
4. To have the same expansive Heart as Heaven and Earth.
5. Respectfully sealed.
6. Some Friend.
7. A lucky Month.
8. For one day practise Virtue.
9. A pure Heart (as No. 13).
10. The Heart though small most generous.
11. A Square in the Water (as No. 21).
12. Heaven is high.

### THE SHANGHAI GROUP.

1. To sing with the Wind and play with the Moon.
2. Securely sealed (as No. 26).
3. When the Water falls the Stone appears.
4. Virtue great as Heaven and Earth (as No. 16).
5. Carefully sealed.
6. Plum Trees and Bamboos.
7. The Moon at Night.
8. (Left out).
9. A pure Heart (as No. 13).
10. My little Heart goes a thousand Miles (to meet you).
11. In a Land amidst the Waters (far away) (as No. 21).
12. A Rush Cottage or Arbour (Rurality).

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|---|---|
| 13. A pure Heart (as No. 9).  | 13. A pure Heart (as No. 9).  |
| 14. The azure Cloud (The Mediator) (as No. 16).                       | 14. A Man of purity of Mind.  |
| 15. To push One forward amongst Men.                                  | 15. To excuse Oneself and lay the Blame on Others.                    |
| 16. The azure Cloud (The Mediator) (as No. 14).                       | 16. Virtue great as Heaven and Earth (as No. 4).                      |
| 17. An inferior Scholar who yields all to Heaven.                     | 17. Intimate with all the Savants of the World.                       |
| 18. Heaven and Water are of the same Colour.                          | 18. Water and Sky of the same Hue.                                    |
| 19. (Not translated; impression apparently lost in transit to China.) | 19. (Not translated; impression apparently lost in transit to China.) |
| 20. (Ditto)   | 20. (Ditto)   |
| 21. A Square in the Water (as No. 11).                                | 21. In a Land amidst the Waters (as No. 11).                          |
| 22. Long is the River, high the Mountain.                             | 22. Lofty Mountains and far-spreading Rivers.                         |
| 23. Long is the River.  | 23. Far-spreading Waters.   |
| 24. Pure is the Breeze on the Stream.                                 | 24. The pure Breeze on the River's Bosom.                             |
| 25. Never thought about it.   | 25. I never had such a Thought.                                       |
| 26. Sealed (as No. 2).  | 26. Securely sealed (as No. 2).                                       |

It will be seen at once, unless the two groups were in collusion, that the script had a real meaning to the Chinese scholars. Though in some cases the interpretations were entirely different, yet in others they were exactly similar, and in many cases both groups touch the same sense. One feels inclined to give the first prize to the Shanghai group for at least the most poetical translations; it is possible that they had somebody with them who could turn a phrase into better English than Mr. Gutzlaff and his team. The basis of nearly all the inscriptions seems to be a poetical idea, truly Oriental in conception (except Mr. Gutzlaff's No. 6!), and it is probable that most of the seal translations are quotations from early Chinese authors, sanctified by time and tradition.

Mr. Comelate continued to interest himself in the matter on Mr. Getty's behalf, and in 1849 Mr. Thomas Taylor Meadows, Chinese interpreter to the British Consulate at Canton, applied

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himself to the problem for Mr. Comelate. He made a new list of translations, with some additional notes on the meaning of each seal graph.

### MR. T. T. MEADOWS' TRANSLATIONS.

1. 'Singing in the Breeze and playing under the Moon.' An allusion to people amusing themselves out of doors on a cool moonlight night.

2. 'Protecting the Enclosure.' The Chinese after pasting down the flap of an envelope, generally with a few grains of cold boiled rice, seal over the opening, so that one half is on the flap, the other half on the main part of the envelope. The impression is made with a red ink, or thin paste, composed of red sulphate of mercury and oil, and thus 'protects the enclosure.'

3. 'When the Water falls the Stones will appear.' A common way of expressing metaphorically the true facts of any case or event coming to light in consequence of the disappearance of obscuring circumstances.

4. 'Mind like Heaven and Earth.' Heaven and Earth are the Dual Powers from which all things spring—deities in fact—whose attributes are 'the highest degree of justice,' 'greatness of mind,' etc.

5. 'Strictly guarding the Closure.' Compare No. 2.

6. 'A Friend like the Mei Flower.' This flower is a kind of plane-tree, held in peculiar estimation by the Chinese.

7. 'The Moon of Night.' An allusion to the beauty of a moonlight night.

8. The impression not to be deciphered.

9. 'A pure Heart.'

10. 'An Inch long Heart extending a thousand Le.' A Le is about one-third of an English mile. The expression alludes to the thoughts of friends extending to each other at the greatest distances.

11. 'Must be in the neighbourhood of Water.' This is an extract from the Chinese classic called 'The Book of Odes,' where it is used by a man who, not seeing his friend, was conjecturing where he might be. Hence it is used for a seal to be impressed on letters between friends at a distance.

12. 'A Portico of Straw.' Porticos or sheds are erected on many roads in China for wayfarers to rest under; these, at a distance from large towns, have often straw or malva-leaf roofs.

13. Same as No. 9.

14. Only two of the last words on this seal can be made out; these are 'Middleman.'

15. 'Put One's-self in the place of Others.' Equivalent to the English, 'Do unto others as you would be done by.'
  16. Seems to be the same as No. 14.
  17. 'Intimate with all the Literati of the Empire.'
  18. 'The Sky and the Water of the same Colour.'
  19. 'Must be among the Plants on the Banks of the Stream.'
- Compare No. 11.
20. Same as No. 5.
  21. Same as No. 11.
  22. 'High Mountains and Long Streams.'
  23. 'A long Stream.'
  24. 'The pure Breeze on the River.'
  25. 'Men do not think of it (virtue).' This is an extract from the 'Sun Yu' of Confucius.
  26. Same as No. 2.

So much for Mr. Meadows.

On May 6, 1850, Mr. Edmund Getty read a paper at a meeting of the Belfast Literary Society, with the title 'Notices of Chinese Seals found in Ireland,' embodying the facts so far as he knew them.

It is interesting to note that in the magnificent collections of antiquities belonging to the Duke of Northumberland, at Alnwick Castle, are a group of eight porcelain seals and two steatite seals, numbered 1 to 10. Four of the porcelain series are of the ape type found in Ireland, and four are of a new type, with a seated lion instead of an ape. A label with the seals states that some of them 'were found in bogs in various parts of Ireland,' but unfortunately the description does not specify which of the seals came from Hibernia.

This collection of seals was probably acquired by Hugh, the third Duke of Northumberland, in the early part of the nineteenth century when he was Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. The Chinese hieroglyphics on the four square ape seals of this Alnwick group appear to mean in English—No. 1: 'Securely sealed' (similar in every respect to Getty's 2 and 26); No. 2: 'When the water falls the stones will appear' (Getty's 3); No. 3: 'The lovely appearance of the moon' (Getty's 51); and No. 4: 'A pure heart' (Getty's 9 and 13). The four seated lion seals give oval impressions, with seal characters much less archaic in appearance than the square impressions from the ape seals. Two of these impressions have similar Chinese hieroglyphics, and one is blank. The two different lion seal impressions have been translated by Dr. Lionel Giles

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of the British Museum as (Nos. 5 and 7) an ancient form of 'Honourable,' and (No. 6) a possible and fanciful grouping of the Chinese signs meaning 'Longevity.' It seems probable that the lion and the steatite seals were introductions from elsewhere than Ireland for the purposes of comparison; though it must be confessed that the lion seals are of a very similar type and material to the ape seals. Mr. Getty does not seem to have been aware of this Alnwick collection, and there may be other unrecorded and similar seals in existence in private hands with less vague pedigrees.

Here, then, is a minor mystery. By the year 1853 over fifty porcelain seals (Mr. Getty seems to have been aware of forty-eight) of ancient type, and certainly old Chinese in origin, art, and sentiment, had been discovered in different parts of Ireland. The seals had been found in bogs, rivers, and under soil apparently undisturbed for many years. So far as is known, these porcelain seals have been found nowhere else, neither in Britain nor on the continent of Europe. On plotting the known places of origin on a map of Ireland further facts are forthcoming.

If a line is drawn from Lough Foyle to Cape Clear, all the find spots are well east of this line, showing that when the seals were deposited intercourse throughout this eastern area was at least fairly free.

The radiant point for the distribution seems to have been Cork County, possibly Cork Harbour, with a belt of fairly even distribution right through the eastern inland parts of Ireland up to the extreme north. This distribution may have been by land or sea, probably the former.

However the seals arrived in Ireland, they certainly arrived together as a collection; one has a vision of a galley wrecked and plundered! and the seals spreading, perhaps by barter, throughout the east of the island from Cork to Antrim.

It is futile to insist, as was the fashion in 1850, that these ape seals arrived from the Orient in tea-chests, or some such merchandise, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, because then the seals would be known and common in Britain and on the Continent, for they would have had a wide distribution throughout the eighteenth-century world. The seals have only been found in Ireland, and Ireland had no particular Oriental monopoly in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The objects are apparently valued in China as heirlooms, and

they would not be exported broadcast as a bonus in merchandise to the Occident.

That the Chinese travelled to Ireland and left these seals there seems to be equally impossible. Prior to A.D. 900 the Chinese were great navigators, but they never reached Europe.

But how did the porcelain ape seals get to Ireland? One can almost visualise these little objects, valued highly by their successive owners, perhaps as pieces in a game, passing from hand to hand in a small silk bag or curiously made box, originally loot from some old Chinese city, and bound for the West by devious chances. What a strange series of events must have brought the collection to Ireland! What wild adventures and journeys must have carried them half round the globe! Even the Phoenicians could not have brought them from China, for until the dawn of the Renaissance far Cathay was too immeasurably remote to be even dreamed of by the Occident.

Did the collection travel by vague trade routes through central China and over the vast deserts of Tibet and Turkestan to the Caspian, or by interminable voyages by the continental coasts past Sumatra to Suez? Did the little seals brave the Cape of Storms with some adventurer like Hanno, or drift ice-locked through the years along the northern shores of Asia? Who can tell?

There is one point that must not be overlooked by the credulous. If over fifty seals were found in Ireland up to the year 1853, how is it that during the last seventy years no records of any further finds in Ireland appear to be forthcoming? But in spite of this suspicious fact, it is surely inconceivable that honest men like Mr. Edmund Getty and Mr. J. W. Murphy, of Belfast, and Mr. J. H. Smith, of Dublin, scholars and antiquaries all, toiled for years to produce a vast hoax throughout Hibernia, 'salting' bogs and streams with rare (or bogus) Oriental images especially imported from China for the purpose? We know that a scholar like Bertram invented an entirely fictitious Roman road guide for Britain about the year 1757, which he called 'The Richard of Cirencester Itinerary,' and successfully befogged the antiquaries of England for over a hundred years; indeed, the effects of this forgery still persist (witness 'Ad Fines' Camp, in Redesdale, Northumberland, a bogus Roman place-name extracted from Bertram's forgery, and perpetrated on the Ordnance Surveys). But this was an easy and contemplative task, an arm-chair affair

compared with such a huge and difficult lark as would have to have been carried out in Ireland without betrayal.

It is quite possible that other seals have been forthcoming in Hibernia since 1853, but the chaotic state of things now prevailing in that unhappy land forbids any real inquiry. Belfast still holds the two presented in Mr. Getty's time to the museum in the Public Library, Royal Avenue. There they sit, two little porcelain apes, while the traffic of a great city roars past their present home. There they sit, side by side on a glass shelf and enshrined in glass, both pure white and both inscrutable; heirs to all the ages, with the following cryptic messages from the East on their bases in a script that few can read:

'The Azure Cloud' (meaning, apparently, in complex Chinese, 'The Mediator,' or 'A Man of purity of Mind').

'As soon as the Water falls the Stones will appear.'

These texts can be understood in Ulster, even if the rest of Ireland ignores the application.

*MUGS' MAHAL.*

## I

I SEE that a learned critic has recently postulated as a condition precedent of a 'best-seller' that there should be odds of ten thousand to one against any of its incidents ever happening. Without claiming for this faithful narrative any of the attributes of a best-seller I must beg you to accept as part of the hypothesis an item against which the odds are scarcely less than those already quoted—namely that there should be, in any one place, as many fools as were collected in that Oriental pleasure-which Mr. Savory aptly nicknamed 'Mugs' Mahal.'

I must further postulate that the aesthetic critical faculties of the average Indian gentleman of the zamindar or small land-owner class are low. In support of this I can invite a study of the houses he builds for himself and the trappings and accoutrements thereof.

These things being granted, meet now, as the Americans say, Messrs. Augustus Savory and Leopold Bowie. Messrs. Savory and Bowie both hailed from Melbourne; they were both tall and spare and swarthy; they both served with distinction in the Great War, and the Armistice left them both at a very loose end. They were an immoral pair; and, so long as the penny was duly turned, scrupled little as to its honesty. Savory's love for Bowie was equivalent to the love of Bowie for Savory. There, however, the points of resemblance end.

Savory's genius was mechanical; with internal combustion engines, gears, dynamos and the like he could do anything. He cared for nothing else on earth—Bowie excepted. It is recorded of him that, being sent to a farm to recuperate from one of his three wounds, he spent his whole time in a little hole in the steading, watching the new petrol-and-oil engine which the farmer had installed to work his threshing-mill. That should give you a picture of Savory. But Bowie was an artist.

Bowie was not a very good artist. In fact, as an original or creative artist he was frankly bad. His 'Four-masters off Cape Otway' caused roars of merriment among all sea-faring men who saw it; beholders fled from his 'Angel of Mons' as from the Gorgon's

Head. But that one talent which 'tis death to hide was not lodged with him useless—though he did strive his hardest to conceal its existence. He could copy anything. When Bowie had copied a picture it was really a little hard for the ordinary layman to tell which was which. If he had not believed in himself so firmly as a creative genius, he could have earned a decent competence anywhere as a manipulator of fakes. He was a stupid, easy-going fellow was Bowie. But Savory was not stupid; neither was he contented with a life of low living and high thinking. He wanted wealth.

When the war came to an end, Savory and Bowie bade one another an affecting farewell. Bowie's idea was to study in Paris, but his natural indolence—and a shortage of cash—kept him no nearer that Paradise of Art than Bloomsbury, where he eked out a precarious livelihood he himself scarcely knew how. Savory, on the other hand, had no use for Europe; he set out for Australia by way of Colombo. But in that bright city his war gratuity tempted him to 'see India,' and he crossed to Madras. He did not see St. Thomas' Mount or Fort St. George or any of the established lions, but he saw most of the motor show-rooms and workshops of that metropolis. As a result, it seemed to Savory that there was something to be done in the motor business in India. The Zamindar of Indole was at that moment advertising for an experienced European to superintend his garage. Savory applied for the job as a stopgap and—less to his own surprise than to that of the Zamindar's establishment (who thought they had made other arrangements)—he got it.

Bowie, on hearing the news, was discouraging. 'You won't make much out of that, Gus,' he wrote.

But Gus was sanguine.

## II

Mugs' Mahal was the newly built residence of the Zamindar of Indole; it was a very remarkable place, as befitted a dwelling designed and superintended by that progressive product of the Zamindari College, Sri Raja Paschmahavati Rama Krishna Raja—Savory's employer. It was a two-story building of glaring white, with a roof of vermillion tiles, and it stood on a small square of its own ground entirely surrounded by paddy-fields. The veranda blinds and the paint-work were carried out in an arresting blue—that wonderful blue which the Hindu sacred artist reserves for the

countenance of the Blue-throated Mahadeo himself. When the paddy round it was growing in fine, solid squares of emerald green, the whole thing made, as Savory said 'a nice li'l bit o' colour.' He thought Bowie would have liked to paint it.

Inside there was electric light (when the plant was working), electric bells (when the uncompromising climate of Indole had not destroyed the connexions), three gramophones, two orchestrellas, an ice-machine, a soda-machine, and a series of rooms numbered like the rooms of a hotel. There were also a large number of framed oleographs of standard works of art tastefully arranged by Sri Raja Paschmahavati etc., himself. Outside were model godowns, a palatial garage, and an incinerator. Mark, please, this last.

Mugs' Mahal, it need hardly be said, was not the name chosen for his residence by its proprietor. He had styled it, however, Mughas Mahal—and Savory's gamin wit supplied the obvious perversion. 'Mahal' is palace; I am not quite sure what the Zamindar meant by 'Mughas.' To Savory the jest was so obvious as to require no explanation; his second letter to Bowie was headed 'Mugs' Mahal,' and there was an end of it.

Sri Raja Paschmahavati Rama Krishna Raja, the sole owner of this paradise, was withal an unhappy man. He had never been to England—though he tried his hardest to disguise this deficiency—but he had imbibed at the Zamindari College enough of the mentality of the West to leave him thoroughly discontented. From the stout and voluble Dewan, Mr. Gopalaswami Rao, down to the dog-boy—the Zamindar bred bull-terriers—one god only was served and worshipped within these walls—the great god Eyewash. For generations untold that deity had presided within the fort and palace of Indole; he had been dutifully served by generations of dewans, generations of storekeepers, and his ritual had been blandly accepted by generations of Zamindars. You told the Raja—only to the mannerless accuracy of officialdom was he anything so low as a Zamindar—that he was a miracle of all earthly perfections and that all within his domain were his loving and worshipping slaves; and while he was congratulating himself on these facts you did him out of a few more rupees or bullied and robbed some unfortunate tenant who dared not complain. That was how life was intended to run; that was how, for long years at Indole, life *had* run.

But the Zamandari College had altered all that; it had blasphemed the great god Eyewash and shaken the Zamindar's faith in that comforting deity—a terrible thing to happen to a stout,

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stupidish young landowner of eight-and-twenty. The life at Indole was *not* satisfying after the Zamindari College ; something—God knew what—was terribly wrong. The old palace was horrible, it was an uninhabitable ashpit ; the young Zamindar had got out of it. But the eat, drink, sleep, and harem of the old slovenly life was equally bad ; so was the cheat, lie, bully, and flatter of the old accepted policy. One had duties, obligations. One ought to lift oneself in art and literature and music ; after the Zamindari College it was impossible to be content with dancing-girls and pictures of Krishna, with the *Mahabharata* and erotic ballads. After the Zamindari College it was impossible to sit and smile fatly and allow the estate to go to the devil ; it was impossible—oh, frightful thing ! —to go on leaving everything to that suave Dewan Mr. Gopalaswami Rao. There was a favourite word of the native press—‘statesman-like.’ One ought to be statesmanlike. But how ?

‘What I want is a *guru*,’ thought the poor bewildered soul. ‘I need a teacher.’ And at that moment a bullock-jatka decanted Savory at his door.

Ordinarily the Dewan would have settled Savory’s business—in which case it is reasonably safe to predict that Savory would not have got the job and this story would never have been written. Mr. Gopalaswami Rao indulged his master’s whims so far as to advertise for a European garage superintendent, but he had no intention of ever finding one. That would be carrying indulgence to an absurd extreme. But it so happened that Savory’s arrival coincided with an intense fit of self-determination on the part of the Zamindar ; to Gopalaswami’s annoyance Sri Raja Paschmahavati etc. saw the applicant himself.

Savory had already inspected the garage with its tiled floors, its three handsome cars, its hoses, tool-racks, pumps, and general perfection. He had no intention of losing it. He appeared to the Zamindar at his best and smartest ; that befogged young man, who had no great experience of Europeans and was unable to draw distinctions, thought he saw before him a real Western gentleman of the best Zamindari College type. He engaged Savory on the spot, while Mr. Gopalaswami hitched about and bit his nails in a corner.

That night the Zamindar slept more peacefully ; he felt—vaguely, as he felt all things—that a new influence had entered his establishment. Savory, however, sat late in his rooms over the garage, going through what he termed ‘a few figgers’—a

pile of bills, receipts, indents, and rail charges. At intervals he whistled.

Three days later, with a fat wad of papers in his hand, he demanded an interview with the Raja. A lynx-eyed butler, whose gaze flitted and flitted to the papers, showed him in eventually upon the Dewan.

Mr. Gopalaswami looked at him over his spectacles, stroking his stomach gently.

'Whatt is it you want, eh ?'

'I want the Raja,' said Savory, standing firm. 'There's something here he ought to see.'

Mr. Gopalaswami smiled ingratiatingly.

'You can show it to me. The Raja is not troubling himself with such things.'

'He's goin' to trouble himself with this, though,' said Savory. 'Look here, Mr. Sammy'—Savory really meant this strange appellation for politeness—'it's no good. Either I show this little lot to the Raja or I leave. An' if I leave he'll want to know why ? And I won't keep him askin'.'

In the end Savory saw the Raja, but he did not see Mr. Gopalaswami's face after he left the room.

The Zamindar strove hard to be statesmanlike, but Savory's quick, clipped English was very puzzling, and the array of scribbled figures he banged and waved about more confusing still. In the end Savory talked to him as a child.

'It's just this, your Royal Highness' (the mode of address was again Savory's invention), 'you've been bein' done. Them cars has been goin' reg'lar into the big shops for repairs that was never needed. You haven't been gettin' the use of 'em. An' every man-jack in your garrage has been drawin' a nice comfy commission on the repair-bills. Cawn't you see it ?'

'O-ah,' said the Zamindar, helplessly.

'A dirty game!' said Savory, waxing virtuous. 'See here. The repairs on that Daimler in the last twelve monce has been 7000 rupees. See here. Item—new crown piece for differential, 100 rupees. The crown piece in that Daimler's as old as the car. I saw it yesterday. That new crown piece don't exist—never did except as a fifty-fifty contract between your servants and the shop. It's a good thing you got me here. Your repair bills is comin' down about eighty per cent. Ninety maybe. I wouldn't say no.'

'O-ah,' said the Zamindar again. He began to flounder ; it was a hot morning and these were horrible insinuations. ' You had better tell this to my Dewan—'

Savory cocked an eye at him.

' Think so ? ' said he, and went out, leaving that last to stick like a poisoned arrow.

It was that evening that Savory, supping alone in his room above the garage, detected a curious flavour in his curry. He collected the major portion of his helping into a handkerchief and sent out the rest. Indians are good actors, but Savory could see that his appearance fit and early at the garage next morning was, to say the least of it, unexpected.

Then one night the Zamindar had to be met at Indole station and brought back from the midnight train. Savory, fancying the drive, took the Daimler out himself ; and on his return to the garage it appeared that the cleaner, in an access of stupidity, had closed the doors. Savory got down and pushed ; the door stuck. He pushed more strongly and it flew open and a huge iron block fell from heaven and crashed on the floor at his feet.

Savory switched on the light and surveyed a cracked tile and a broken length of wire.

' Of all the botched jobs ! ' he murmured, contempt for the incapable worker ousting for the moment rage against the would-be assassin.

But a fortnight later he interviewed the Raja again.

' I'm sorry, y'r Royal Highness,' he said, ' but your folks must stop tryin' to do me in. See here '—he produced another of his terrible little papers—'here's the chemical analysis of two lots of curry I've just been given. And there's been other things.' He narrated some of them.

The Zamindar was stirred at last. He sprang up from his 'office' chair.

' Bey Godd ! ' he said. ' This will naht do. I will naht have this in my house. I will make inquiries, I will ascertain—'

Savory thought fit to test his new-established powers of command.

' Come an' do it now, y'r Highness,' he said. Sri Raja Paschmahavati Rama Krishna Raja hesitated for a perceptible second—and then came.

It was a merry morning in Mugs' Mahal. The Zamindar suddenly discovered what he could do by being really angry ; he

enjoyed it and he went on with it for hours. A disconsolate company of fourteen late retainers tramped off to Indore as a result. ' You are one good man, Saveree,' said the Zamindar, lapsing from College English in his excitement, ' always you shall stay here with me.'

' You bet ! ' said Savory.

No one was more zealous in inquiry and examination, more implacable to the discovered culprit, more horrified and indignant and vengeful than the sleek Dewan, Mr. Gopalaswami Rao. He was quick, was Mr. Gopalaswami, at spotting jumping cats. If you want to succeed as a Dewan that is one of the first things you must learn.

But Savory knew himself established. *Vide* his letter to Bowie of even date.

' I'm getting on famously. Old Rummykrishy loves me.' ('Rummykrishy,' it will hardly be necessary to explain, is Savory for Sri Raja Paschmahavati Rama Krishna etc.; perhaps, for brevity's sake, we might do worse than adopt it.) ' There's stuff in Rummykrishy. He's going to make me all sorts of things. I believe I could be Deewann if I wanted to, but I don't, not seeing my way to working it, though I don't deny there would be a lot in it too. Still, things is better as they are. . . . You said I wouldn't make much out of this; we'll see, boy, we'll see.'

The attentive reader can hardly regard this optimism as misplaced.

### III.

The life of Mr. Augustus Savory at Mugs' Mahal would provide reading not altogether devoid of entertainment; but for the purposes of this condensed narrative it is now necessary that we skip six months of it. At the end of that period we encounter a very different Savory. He is clad no longer in breeches and gaiters as becomes a garage superintendent, but in a suit of tussore silk. He no longer occupies a room above the motors; he is installed in what he himself calls a ' sweet ' in the main building. He still 'superintends' the garage work, but he superintends also a great many other things within and without Rummykrishy's red-white-and-blue palace. You could hardly call him a major-domo, you could hardly call him a confidential secretary; but he is both these things—and more.

Rummykrishy is well pleased. A man worth poisoning is

worth trusting, and Rummykrishy's easy confidence is given. At the pay of a 'European' garage superintendent—which he made no offer to increase—he has secured as confidential adviser a sahib not much inferior to the Principal of the Zamindari College himself, a man almost—yes, almost 'statesmanlike' in his outlook. The ideals of Europe, the methods of the West, at one's elbow, and all for the monthly pay of a garage superintendent—that was something worth having !

Savory was ready to admit that he was doing pretty well ; he meant to do better. By a tacit but perfect understanding with Mr. Gopalaswami Rao, each worked his own field ; in Savory's there were many flowers for the picking, many little offerings and considerations that accrued in the most natural way in the world. Savory collected these without scruple, from which it may perhaps be argued that his morals were not above reproach. I never for one moment hinted that they were.

It had long seemed to Savory that there was 'big money' to be made out of Rummykrishy, and he was now proceeding to develop one obvious line of exploitation. Rummykrishy must take up horse-racing. Savory was engaged in correspondence with one Skinny Lewisohn of Melbourne with regard to the transportation to India of (1) Skinny himself, (2) half a dozen walers, and (3) jockeys to match, when something much better suddenly fell from heaven into his lap.

It was one of Savory's duties at this period to make a digest of the European papers—what poor Rummykrishy called the 'Home' papers—for the delectation of his employer, who found that in this rural retreat English became daily a more and more difficult language to read. You will be able to picture the scene—Rummykrishy sprawling and wheezing and goggling in a long chair ; Savory's knife-edge accent butchering such of the King's English as the current *Times* or *Morning Post* or *Spectator* had gathered together. Picture them then on one very hot morning engaged in this occupation while Savory reads out the following passage :

"Old Master for India." In another column we report the sale of the Marquis of Keddlesley's collection of pictures where some sensation was caused by the purchase of Van Dyck's *Portrait of Two Children* on behalf of the Rajah of Kherkot. We understand that the Dutch artist's masterpiece will be sent without delay to the Rajah's palace at Kherkot itself, which is situated in the Punjab. While the purchase is illuminatory of the rapid advance of Indians

in all spheres of life, it is regrettable that a treasure so long in the possession of an Englishman should be suffered to go to a country so remote as India.'

Savory yawned and threw aside the paper; Rummykrishy rumbled discontentedly.

' Saveree, I do naht like thatt. Thatt is naht fair play. Why should not these old masters be available also for Indians, eh ? '

' It's race-hate, y'r Highness,' said Savory, wishing his employer would order something to drink. He said 'rice-hite'—but you know how he talked.

Rummykrishy brooded, conscious of a vague distemper.

' It is naht fair, Saveree. Why should naht these ohld masters come to India ? '

At critical moments of their lives many great historical personages have heard voices in their ear impelling and suggesting. So at this moment, Savory afterwards declared, it was with him. An angelic voice, audible only to himself, pronounced the single word 'Bowie!' and followed it up with the cryptic question 'Why not ?'

Why shouldn't some old masters come to India ? Why shouldn't they come to Indole ? Why not to Mugs' Mahal ? Bowie ! Better than worryin' on with that adjectived shark Skinny Lewisohn anyway.

He surveyed Rummykrishy with a speculative glance.

' Well, y'r Highness, how many Injins are there who're what-you-might-say educated up to them things ? They cost money, y' know. Them as has money in this country hasn't got the tiste.'

The Zamindar bridled.

' I do naht agree. It is naht so. I myself——'

Savory's sudden awakening of interest was well done.

' Would y'r Highness think of goin' in for that sort o' thing ? Does seem a shime that feller in the Punjab should have 'em an' us not.' He cast an appraising glance round the apartment, called, according to the door, ' No. 7 Raja's Study.' ' With this bewtiful house an' all.'

Rummykrishy was fired ; he rang an electric bell and called for gin. The gin fired him still further.

' Saveree, I would much like to get one of these pictures. One—two—yes, three or four. Whatt is the cost to me ? This *samsathanam* is verree rich. We ought to set example. Thatt is true. Saveree, how does one get these things ? '

Savory sat back, caressing his chin, deep in thought.

'Seems as if we're sort o' meant to,' he said at last. 'It's ordained like. Y' see, I do happen to know a dealer in London. I've a pull with him in a kind of way. I dessay I could do somethin'.'

Rummykrishy was like a child with the prospect of a new toy ; he *must* have it.

'Yess, yess,' he said, goggling. 'Go on, mann, go on !'

Smoothly and persuasively Savory went on.

That night he wrote a letter—a very long letter—to Bowie, still languishing in Bloomsbury and dreaming more and more hopelessly of Montmartre.

'Don't you go making any mistake,' said the letter towards the end. 'This is a square deal. Rummykrishy wants old masters ; it's my duty to see he gets them, and gets them cheap. But unless he pays handsome he won't believe in the things, so we'll have to take a certain amount just to keep up the pretence. It won't be too bad. It's all safe as houses. He don't know an old master from an old missus ; and even if he did find out, I can't help the dealer having swindled me, can I ? But he won't. It's jam, boy, jam.'

With that lamentable extravagance that condemned him to a lifetime of penury Bowie replied by cable : 'How much do I get ?'

Savory, dropping pretence, wired back laconically 'Halves.'

#### IV.

If this story is to be told in a reasonable space, I must here indent on your imagination to fill in another six months. At the end of that period 'No. 7 Raja's Study' was embellished by a very emphatic Reynolds and a small but characteristic Murillo. The latter was the first-fruits of Bowie's long-deferred acquaintance with the Louvre. They looked, Savory thought, very nice. That they were what they purported to be was demonstrated by their undeniably exact resemblance to the photographs of the originals in an art catalogue.

For a while Rummykrishy gloated over them in ecstasy ; then an unfortunate idea struck him.

'Look here, Saveree, why is this naht known ? Why is there not publicity ? Why do not the papers write about these pictures ? Like when that Kherkot bought.'

Savory reflected.

' Well, of course, y'r Highness, these wasn't just what you might call *famous* pictures. Most like they didn't cost so much.'

' They cahst a great deal,' said Rummykrishy, pouting.

' Quite enough,' said Savory handsomely. ' They're good an' all that, but I dessay the public didn't know 'em.'

Rummykrishy pondered for a moment, regarding his old masters almost with hostility. Then he spoke.

' I want that the public should know. We are setting example. What good if the public know nothing? I want that the papers should write about these pictures also.'

Savory had long foreseen this crisis—first as fatal, latterly as manageable. He conciliated his employer and sought out the Dewan.

' Look here, Mr. Sammy'—Mr. Gopalaswami Rao had long ceased to writhe visibly at this horrible curtailment of his name—' The Raja wants a bit o' Press notice for these paintings of his. Now I'm no hand with a pen, an' I don't know the old place same as you do. I think this is a job for you.' Mr. Savory had no special wish to bruit abroad his connexion with Mugs' Mahal.

Events moved according to plan. Mr. Gopalaswami Rao, a little surprised and a good deal more flattered by Savory's magnanimity, spread himself to the extent of about five thousand words; and the estate typist made twenty copies. One journal cut him down to half a column; four others to a paragraph: 'The Dewan of Indole writes to tell us——'; the rest put him in the waste paper basket. It was eminently satisfactory; the Zamindar was partially assuaged, and for the moment no one took any ostensible notice.

Then came Mr. Edaljee.

Mr. Edaljee first appeared as a grimy square of pasteboard presented to Savory at eight o'clock at night. Savory had not spent an illuminative year at Mugs' Mahal without realising the import of visitors who called at such an hour. His mental comment, 'Dirty work at the cross-roads,' very fairly summed up the probabilities.

Mr. Edaljee was a young Parsee with invisible-grey eyes, an ingratiating manner and a large tray of oranges. He stated that he was a dealer in arts and curios; he had read with much interest about the Zamindar's old masters. Could he, as a great favour—on the word 'favour' crisp notes rustled unmistakably in some part of his garments—could he be permitted to see them?

Savory surveyed this unpleasant nettle in his path for a few seconds ; then he grasped it. Quite manifestly there was something behind all this ; Parsee gentlemen—or any other—do not travel miles in bullock-jutkas at night in order to look at pictures. Quite manifestly, further, a refusal would only excite suspicion. Refusal would be reasonable enough on the score of the hour—but not after fifty rupees had changed hands. No sensible man was going to refuse a small favour after that. No, Mr. Edaljee had got to see the pictures.

Savory put a few adroit questions—or as adroit as he knew how. 'I must ask you this, old man, just to make sure of your *bouna feids*. You don't mind ?' Mr. Edaljee did not mind at all. As a net result of his catechism Savory concluded that if Mr. Edaljee were a dealer in art at all he knew very little about old—or new—masters. He slipped from his chair.

'Just a moment, old man, till I see if the coast's clear.'

The coast was clear. Savory walked swiftly along to 'No. 7 Raja's Study,' took the bulbs from the electric lights and hid them in a cupboard. It was as well to take no risks. He reappeared before the surprised Mr. Edaljee with a smoky oil lamp.

'It's a pity you came so late, old man. We've had a bother with the electrics in this room all last week. But you'll see with the lamp.'

He led the way on tiptoe to 'No. 7 Raja's Study,' reflecting that if the worst came to the worst it was only a question of how much this fellow would take to keep his mouth shut—just, of course, to save the poor Raja from disappointment and disillusion. It needn't be much. Savory knew little of pictures, but he could read men's faces. He read all that in Edaljee's.

Perhaps Mr. Edaljee underestimated Savory, perhaps he was flurried ; at any rate in the room his acting was distinctly poor. He just glanced at the pictures, satisfied himself that they really were there, compared them swiftly with something he held in the palm of his hand, and announced himself satisfied. 'A very great pleasure.'

Savory led the way back, carrying the lamp and smiling to himself. Whatever Mr. Edaljee was he was not a devotee of the higher art. Whatever was the purpose of his visit he did not come as a connoisseur to feast his eyes upon beautiful work. That the pictures were old masters he had never seemed to doubt ; what he had wanted to know was exactly where they hung.

Back in his sanctum, Savory blew out the lamp.

'Look here, friend, you didn't come all this way just for a half-minute with them pictures in the dark. There's something else. You'd better get down to it.'

The invisible-grey eyes flickered swiftly for a moment and then Mr. Edaljee got down to it. Even Savory's eyebrows rose as he heard.

Mr. Edaljee, it appeared, had a friend—a client. This client had read in the Press—Savory cursed, for the *n*th time, Rummy-krishy's conceit—of the Zamindar of Indole's rare pictures. The client also wished to acquire old masters for he was consumed with jealousy. But not at cost price. No, the client was neither so rich as the Zamindar of Indole, nor—the eyes came alive for an instant—so stupid. He was prepared to pay a good price, however, a satisfactory price for all concerned, for old masters; and more particularly for the old masters now in the possession of the Zamindar of Indole. Frankly, it was neither love of art nor ambition that lay behind his client's motives; it was just jealousy, just spleen. Foolish, no doubt, but—there it stood.

Mr. Edaljee measured Savory's silently attentive face and then went on. His client wanted these pictures—these and no other. He must have them. No active assistance was required from Savory, but—Mr. Edaljee's lean hand set down a wad of hundred-rupee notes on the table—if a certain window could be left unbarred on a certain night, if a watchman could sleep with unnatural soundness; then—

Savory burst out laughing.

'Burglary, eh? House-breakin' by night. You don't want much, do ye?'

Mr. Edaljee would have made a good poker player. Without a word he set a second wad of notes on the table beside the first. Savory laughed again.

'No, old man! I'm not seein' you. Sweep it up an' put it away. There's nothing doin'. I'm surprised at you. Comin' here an' askin' a European gentleman to play second fiddle in a blinkin' crime. Nay, Harold, nay. Your jutka's waitin'.'

Mr. Edaljee gathered up his notes and shrugged. For the first time Savory looked into his eyes.

'I suppose,' he said—his English was much better than Savory's—'I suppose you will not be here for ever. When you are going away—surely then.' He wrote on a card. 'My address.'

'I'll think about it,' said Savory grinning. 'But it's hardly my line. I may be a bad hat, but I ain't quite's bad's all that yet.'

Mr. Edaljee bowed and withdrew. Savory thoughtfully peeled and ate one of his excellent oranges.

Bowie, who was at this time inhabiting a *pension* in the Avenue Victoria and painting—I mean purchasing—a Rubens and a Van Dyck, received a cryptic cable that must have puzzled the girl-clerks of the Châtelet. 'Rats appearing,' it said; 'hurry up pictures.' If hay can only be made while the sun shines, Savory had thought, there is no sense in wool-gathering.

## V.

I think it was a defect of the old Greek dramatists that they employed so infrequently as an instrument of their catastrophe that most fatal of agents, the well-meaning idiot. For how many tragedies, how many miscarriages is he not responsible! Perhaps there were no well-meaning idiots among the ancient Greeks; if that were so they were more fortunate than Savory.

Savory's well-meaning idiot was Mr. Krishna Ayyar, I.C.S. Beyond the fact that he *was* a well-meaning idiot, that he was intensely earnest, and that he applied to the most unlikely projects an optimism which ill-natured critics might label stupidity, there is nothing to be said against Mr. Krishna Ayyar. But Savory scented trouble from the moment he heard of his impending visit to Mugs' Mahal.

His apprehensions were realised when he was summoned one morning to 'No. 7 Raja's Study,' and found his employer in conclave there with a stoutish, greyish, plainish gentleman in a very high collar and spectacles. Savory could see that the Zamindar was in high good humour and deduced that Mr. Krishna Ayyar had been flattering him for the last half hour. Rummykrishy differed from the historic carpenter; he would never conceivably have complained of the thickness of the butter.

'Ah, Saveree!' said Rummykrishy expansively. 'Come along, mann. This is Mr. Krishna Ayyar of the Yi C. S. He has come about the pictures.'

'The devil he has!' thought Savory. 'I knew that newspaper puff would ruin us yet.' His eye roved to the medley on the wall—

the Reynolds, the Murillo, the Van Dyck, and the Rubens (the last two now arrived and showing some signs of hasty finishing). Aloud he expressed his pleasure in the meeting.

'Let me explain in one word,' said Mr. Krishna Ayyar, plunging briskly *in medias res*. 'I am now organising an exhibition in Madras to further the cause of the Depressed Classes. All proceeds will be devoted to building a reading-room for the lowest castes. I have come here to ask Indole for the loan of his celebrated and wonderful pictures. But Indole'—he smiled tolerantly—'insists on consulting you first.'

Savory stared at him, hardly believing his ears. Another mug! Well was this place named Mugs' Mahal! Another miracle had happened; here was an educated man, a man who ought to know better, believing in the genuineness of Rummykrishy's old masters. He had been looking at them for an hour and he didn't see they were a fraud. Oh, wonderful country! But an exhibition in Madras, real experts poking and peering—that was an entirely different thing. It mustn't be allowed.

He stroked his straight blue chin.

'I take it very kind of y'r Highness,' he said—and at the sound of his voice and accent it was Krishna Ayyar's turn to stare—'But if I'm to speak my mind, I don't think we can let them go.'

There was an awkward silence, broken by Rummykrishy's voice, sulky and petulant.

'Why naht?'

'It's a terrible risk,' said Savory. 'Them pictures can't be replaced. If anything was to happen—It's a risk.' He proceeded with as little obvious exaggeration as possible to explain the magnitude of that risk.

But he fought a fight against hopeless odds. Rummykrishy was out for advertisement; Krishna Ayyar had astutely promised him that his pictures would be made the talk of the Presidency. Rummykrishy's 'What good if the public know nothing?' had expressed his real attitude towards his treasures. And Krishna Ayyar was desperately in earnest about his reading-room; he was ready to promise anything—every care, every attention, police guards, escorts, anything you could mention. Savory, having no real case, saw himself losing.

'How can there be risk?' said Rummykrishy at last. 'You, Saveree, will drive the pictures to Madras in the Daimler yourself, is it not? What risk?'

'Oh, will I?' thought Savory. But it was Krishna Ayyar who settled it.

'And, of course,' he said, 'you can have the pictures insured.'

That finished Savory. Whatever happened, no insurance expert must come to Mugs' Mahal to value these gems of art. He gave in, receiving the congratulations of Krishna Ayyar and the renewed smiles of his employer.

Savory spent the afternoon in a long reflective walk round the estate, and it led him to the definite conclusion that the hay-making season was over. It was hard luck, but, after all, things might have been worse. And he was not quite finished; there was an attractive corner of the field to mow yet.

He came in from his walk, bathed and changed with deliberation, and composed another cryptic telegram to Bowie. 'Rats swarming,' it read; 'cease fire.' The dispatch of this attended to, he fished from his pocket-book a grimy square of pasteboard and wrote at some length to Mr. Edaljee.

## VI.

I feel now that what we require for this story is the cinema. You know these fine passages where you view alternately the hero bound and gagged under a descending hydraulic press and the heroine speeding to his assistance in a racing car, while somewhere else the crook party are felling a tree across the road. We want something like that here. We want to present rapidly and together a number of simultaneous events.

We want to show Bowie, with curses on his lips, holding a cable in his hand and regarding disgustedly a promising and half-completed Lely. We should show Krishna Ayyar going fussily about his preparations for his exhibition; and we should show, as the main theme running through all these, Savory and Edaljee meeting in the Traveller's Bungalow at Indole and conversing closely all through a stuffy afternoon.

Having no cinema, we must content ourselves with the bald statement that these things happened; and narrate further that the first thing Savory did on his return to Mugs' Mahal was to present his astonished employer with a month's notice. His next act was to pack the pictures for the exhibition.

Speed being some object, Bowie had been a shade niggardly in the size of his canvases; they were not so big as Savory could have

wished for his present purpose. But the Rubens was really quite a monumental work, and by the time wrappings and packings had been carefully and lavishly applied, Savory was not ill-pleased with the bulky wooden case that stood before him.

'If that gets into the Daimler,' he reflected, 'they'll have to take her to bits and build her again round it.'

Rummykrishy was dismayed by the intelligence that the crate was too big to get into any of his cars. He came and surveyed it gloomily.

'Goods train, y'r Highness,' Savory told him cheerfully. 'There is nothin' else for it.'

Rummykrishy pouted. 'Must we then insure ?'

Savory knew his employer like a book. He knew that prodigality over large expenditures, that meanness over small avoidable items that characterises Rummykrishy's breed. He rose to the occasion.

'Not worth it, y'r Highness,' he opined. "'Sides, they're all packed now. We'd have to undo 'em. And there's not too much time if they're to get a good place in the show. But I think we might run to a special van. That might be wise. But not if you think no.'

But Rummykrishy thought yes, most certainly.

Savory did himself and the pictures the honour of escorting them in a bullock-cart to Indole station and of personally seeing them into their special van and of padlocking and sealing that same. His zeal was most highly commendable ; in fact it might truthfully be said that from the moment the pictures were packed into their case—which stood in the passage outside his 'sweet'—he had never let it out of his sight, and rather rarely into anyone else's. He said he felt responsible—which was true.

Loading heavy crates into an Indian goods train is thirsty work ; what more natural than that Savory, on its completion, should adjourn to the Indole refreshment-room for a drink ? It was less natural that he should find sitting there a Parsee with curious light-coloured eyes, but, after all, Parsees travel everywhere. Still, his conversation with this Parsee was odd.

'The number of the van's one seven eight dash forty-three,' he said. 'And the rail receipt's number two thousand and seventy—but you don't get that, my bonny. And here's the tools.' A small packet changed hands. 'Now I'm catching the evenin' passenger to Madras to see about a ship. Don't forget me if we never meet again.'

Mr. Edaljee's response was to pass over a small thick envelope that crackled. In the evening passenger Savory counted its contents with a smile ; and as the train drew out into the flat country he hummed an improvisation to a well-known air : ' Good-bye, Rummykrishy ; farewell, Mugs' Mahal,' sang Savory.

The railway that runs between Indole and Madras has at times and occasions been censured for the dilatoriness of its methods with goods traffic ; if the fortunes of Rummykrishy's special van are to be taken as typical, these aspersions are perhaps not wholly unmerited. That it journeyed along for many tedious hours was perhaps necessary ; but there can have been no sound administrative reason why, at Hammadi Junction, ten miles from its destination, it was deliberately taken off the train to which it was attached and backed down into a siding and left there. There may have been reasons other than administrative—reasons connected with a light-eyed Parsee and further fat and crackling envelopes ; as to these one can only surmise. But the fact remains that it was taken off and backed away at six o'clock of a hot evening. There it stood, and the goods went on to Madras without it.

Abandoning all attempt to explain with reasons, let us content ourselves with a recital of further facts. About midnight on that same night—which was very dark—a bullock-cart floundered down a little-used but convenient road that wandered through paddy-fields and terminated not very far from that lone siding where Rummykrishy's treasures rested. From the cart there descended a number of stoutly built, scantily clad individuals who scattered and converged upon the black, looming bulk of the van. I am not prepared to swear that a light-eyed Parsee was among them ; neither will I deny it. What the yard-watchman was doing I do not know.

A locked and sealed van is a locked and sealed van ; but if you possess a duplicate seal and a duplicate key it becomes a van only. That is to say, it becomes a van only for such time as is necessary to assail its contents ; it then becomes once more a van padlocked and sealed.

The sleepy Eurasians in charge of an early morning goods picked up at Hammadi a van left there by mistake on the previous evening. It bumped and clattered on to its appointed goal. But there was nothing inside it.

## VII.

I said before that we had need of the cinema ; we have even greater need of it now. This narrative should end in a series of rapid pictures, changing quickly in scene and personnel.

The first picture, of course, would represent the yards of a certain goods station in Madras and a sealed and locked van standing alone in the beautiful sunshine. Mr. Krishna Ayyar would appear followed by officials of the railway and a posse of red-and-white police. He opens the van with ceremony, fussing considerably the while, and reveals a fine, clean, iron interior. Empty !

The second picture is of an Orient liner ploughing through blue seas south—far south—of Ceylon. On the deck sits Savory, clad in his tussore suit and smiling his inscrutable smile. He takes from his pocket-book a small piece of pasteboard and a bank-draft and regards them with interest. We see a close-up of the draft ; staggering, wonderful figures leap at us from the screen. . . .

Now we are at Mugs' Mahal again—in 'No. 7 Raja's Study.' Rummykrishy, agitated and perspiring, is receiving frantic wires from the promoter of the exhibition. He is searching for his rail receipt—helplessly meditating action against the railway company. 'What to do !' he murmurs. 'Ah, if Saverjee had been here. He would have managed all this soa well !' But that would have been a refinement of which even Savory was hardly capable.

But the best picture of all would show a room in a back street of Georgetown, that congested quarter of the beautiful city of Madras. It would show Mr. Edaljee and a large square packing-case. Mr. Edaljee gets to work with hammer and irons ; he knocks off the lid. He unearths, with an increasingly agonised expression, a quantity of wrappings, several large pieces of wood, two or three vermillion tiles, and a large block of iron—once the potential instrument of Savory's decease !

As a pendant to this we should have to see again Mugs' Mahal, and the garage thereof, and Savory in his shirt-sleeves hard at work with a tailor's shears. I took care to mention that among the many modern improvements introduced by Rummykrishy was an incinerator. Rummykrishy was proud of his incinerator ; but I doubt if he ever contemplated its devouring, inch by inch and morsel by morsel, one Reynolds, one Van Dyck, one Rubens (large), and one Murillo.

And lastly, we should have to see Savory again in a fine hotel in

Melbourne, writing to Bowie. It would seem from his letter that Bowie had made uncomprehending remonstrance. ' You've no call to grouse,' says Savory's screed. ' It was money for nothing, and not a bad profit at that. And if I haven't made a good get-away you can call me a fool. The only soul who could squeak is Edaljee and he just blooming well can't. The rest can fight it out with the railway company amongst them—and a fat lot they'll make of it too. Them pictures will never be seen again this side of Judgment. Good Staff work, Digger ; I've seen worse jobs done in the war. I'm enclosing a bit of a cheque for your good self with love from Gus. If you don't like it you can send it back.'

We see the cheque ; for the moment we should not mind being Bowie.

HILTON BROWN.

**CRICKET—II.****SOME NOTABLES.**

My eldest brother, the late Lord Cobham, known in his cricket days as C. G. Lyttelton, was a self-taught cricketer, and by the beauty of his style and all-round proficiency kindled a passion for the game in all his seven younger brothers. He seems to have commandeered at the age of twelve the services of a deft manservant of the Worcestershire name of Tandy, a capital bowler, and on the primitive cricket ground close—too close—to the Parish Church he spent many an hour learning how to bat without any coaching whatever. The result was a method of back-play defence which was adequate, except, as already stated, for the Lord's shooters. His great contemporary, R. A. H. Mitchell, was less good with turning balls, but more certain with shooters than anyone that ever played, except C. J. Ottaway and W. G., the latter of whom, against a mechanical bowler like Morley of Notts, would score two runs off these terrifying balls, digging them past mid-on : a supreme stroke. 'Mike' (R. A. H. Mitchell), in short, though a magnificent hitter all round, I should say had less natural genius than C. G. His play was more by rule, and he suffered, as two generations of Etonian players suffered, from relying too much on forward play when the fast bowlers like Richardson developed the break-back on hard wickets. But Mike's regulated style made him an admirable model to watch. Every counsel he gave us he illustrated to perfection. His style was somewhat harsh, though most commanding, and he had no stroke to compare in beauty with C. G.'s cut behind point, about which W. G. waxed eloquent. As to style, of the players I have watched I would name F. R. Fryer, D. Q. Steel, and L. Palairé as the most attractive ; but probably C. F. Buller and Alfred Lubbock were quite in the front rank. It should be noted that there is no comparison possible between the great players before and after 1880, as Palairé, for instance, and R. H. Spooner could only leave the spectator imagining what their on-side play would have been if any on-balls had ever been bowled.

Much has been written about eminent cricketers of every decade since 1870, but I should like to mention that for schoolboys,

for defence on a difficult wicket, the best I ever saw was my old antagonist A. J. Webbe. Not that he could stop more difficult balls than Ottaway, but he was a far finer hitter.

We played against each other for seven years on end at Lord's, and ever since his play in 1874 I was thankful to see his back.

We caught each other out twice, both of his catches being brilliant beyond belief. Probably Shrewsbury had the finest defence on a sticky wicket, but I saw too little of him to judge first-hand. Nor had I any luck in watching 'Ranji,' but saw once a superb piece of defence on the part of F. S. Jackson against Richardson. It should be mentioned that there was hardly a batsman in the 'seventies who did not succumb to the break-back, such as Alfred Shaw, Bates, and many others had at command when the pitch was sticky.

Many a discussion took place on the subject; and in 1876 at Cambridge W. G. was asked, after several present had uttered divers opinions, how did he think the problem was to be solved. The great man, whose mind was not of the analytical sort, said: 'Well, I say you ought to put the bat against the ball.' Nor did it generally seem difficult for him to do so, though A. Shaw beat him in the first innings of *Gents v. Players* in 1875, but wisely withdrew from the fray in the next innings, and consequently W. G. gave a most tremendous display of dominance over the other bowlers, scoring 150. Though the wicket was fast, this was the finest innings I ever saw. Jessop I never saw in form. That must have been a cheering spectacle if C. H. Alcock—an accurate man—is right in testifying to the following: The first ball that Jessop received in the Varsity match was of a good length just outside the off stump. He smote it just over mid-off, and it continued rising till it impinged on the umpire's box to the right side of the pavilion and bounded back with such force as to land on the turf over all the benches and then rolled on to the middle of the ground. If that ever occurred, as stated, it ought not to be forgotten.

For sheer genius at the game all round A. G. Steel stands very high indeed. He knew all about it as a boy, never required any practice, and, though an ugly style of batsman, was just as likely to score against the best bowling as against inferior stuff. He was a pioneer in bowling, and deadly, till we found out how to play him: which was to run out to his leg-break, always a slow ball, and catch it on the full pitch. For he could break! Critics of the game, in

newspapers at any rate, used to decry this method of defence because it looked like rashness. But often it would mean real prudence. On a sticky wicket a bowler like A. Shaw was for nearly all batsmen unplayable. Thus for Middlesex against Notts at Lord's in 1879 (the wet year) two or three of us saw that a bold policy was the truest caution. Instead of standing still blocking the balls, we ran in to the pitch, hit vigorously and oft-times fluikily; but instead of courting orthodox and certain failure we knocked up twenty or thirty runs apiece, with chances, and won the match. Long-legged, tall men like 'Jammy' Ridley or Bonner could not do it.

But a great many batsmen, quick at starting, ought to do it, though they be denounced for slogging. The great Australian team of 1882 contained four determined sloggers, who on sticky wickets when the totals were low were of priceless value to the side. In the match alluded to G. F. Vernon brought it off with admirable skill, and F. J. Ford was caught splendidly off an unspeakably high hit by a player nicknamed 'Mary' who, seeing the blow delivered, turned round and ran with all speed to the ropes, just as if he were escaping some instant peril. On arriving at the boundary he turned again towards the wickets, gazed up into the heavens, and waited quietly for the ball to descend into his capacious 'flippers.' His accuracy and rapidity of judgment at the start of this manœuvre were beyond all praise.

The biggest hitter I ever saw was Bonner. At Scarborough in 1882 his notable knocks off Bunny Lucas began with a whack landing the ball sixty yards over the sea-wall. He dealt with short balls like Francis Ford, and all self-respecting near-in fieldsmen retired ten or fifteen yards to the rear. But C. J. Thornton was more exhilarating to watch, as no one knew when he would 'take the long handle.' One or two facts about bowlers are worth preserving. W. G. once told me that the most difficult ball that he ever was bowled by was one of Noble's. It swerved in the air from leg to off and then broke back.

I succumbed to a similar horror sent by Phil Morton at Lord's in 1879. The more correctly you diagnose the curve the more certain you are to miss the break. Ever since that event I have rated Morton the best amateur bowler in my experience (though I have failed to see more than a few), and the curious fact is that he learnt a finger trick in the middle of the season (1878) whereby he made the ball break about nine inches on a perfectly smooth wicket at Lord's. No other bowler at that date dreamt of such

a thing, and A. Shaw used to advise bowlers on a smooth wicket to give up the attempt to bring off a break and go for accuracy of pitch.

Morton also, though slightly built, at that time got an astonishing speed on the ball, and no one could see whence it came. The Australians, routed by him in 1878, were eloquent on this subject for many a long day. Alfred Shaw was by far the most accurate in pitch of all of them, and his change of pace was subtle ; more subtle than his brain. Harry Forster is authority for the statement that he put a half-crown on the pitch, and Shaw landed the ball on it three times running—the condition of his enriching himself to that extent. Going in against him on a tea-pot wicket at Fenners in 1880 I foolishly patted the ground in front of the crease with the round side of the bat. The great artist observed from the other end that a slight hollow in the surface had been made ; so he pitched the ball precisely on the surface of the off slope, broke it six inches, and whipped off the leg-bail. He used to chortle years afterwards as he narrated this feat. But I took toll of him the next innings !

At Scarborough in 1882 my first ball was an unappeasable customer from G. Ulyett. Delivered with his utmost strength, it was a ' yorker ' that swerved about a foot and a half. I began by planning for a half-volley to leg ; next, was concerned lest an instep should be smashed, and long before the situation was diagnosed the stumps were splayed.

It should be noted that balls that swerve, swerve most if they are pitched well up, and a yorker for the first ball is most likely to do mischief—that is, before the batsman has had time to expect a swerve. Of bowlers I have played I thought Spofforth, as a medium pace bowler, was the best. But from observation of Richardson I should imagine that no bowler sent down so many hard balls, keeping it up through the season. Other great bowlers have done wonderful things on certain days ; and without doubt the most imposing and unforgettable display ever given by an amateur was by Powys for Cambridge *v.* Oxford in 1870.

Cambridge amassed a fine score through the day, and the powerful, though doubtless somewhat wearied, team of Oxonians found themselves in a tight place, having to face the swart, bearded Australian, with slouching gait and drooping left shoulder, bowling from the Nursery end. The week before, W. G. had won the match for M.C.C., being the only man on the side who could look at Powys' deliveries, and on returning to the pavilion prophesied a rough time for Oxford. Rough it was. The pace—he bowled left-handed over

the wicket, a genuine round-hand action—was really terrific. Now and again one marvelled that some of the players got their bats out of the way in time, and never shall I forget the look of the stumps dancing vertically down towards long-stop. That functionary by the way, F. Tobin of Rugby, gives a gloomy picture of the state of his arms and legs after the game came to an end. Viewing that dogged courage, one can understand how England came victoriously through the Great War. But it was not the pace that mowed down the Oxford wickets, but the appalling swerve from leg and dead shooting of most of the balls: so that as Powys plugged away at the leg stump the batsman was threatened with lameness for life if the cannon-ball crashed on to his feet, with a very good chance of being given out leg-before and being carried home on a stretcher. Most of the Oxonians tried to stop the balls playing back, which was for anyone, except C. J. Ottaway, quite hopeless.

As to the Cambridge batting it is worth recording, as an instance of the decay of greatness, that I only saw W. Yardley bat twice. The first time was on that Monday in 1871 when he murdered the Oxford bowling most cruelly, especially the 'lobs' of 'Jammy' Ridley, whacking them as he pleased to every corner of the field. The second occasion was in the Canterbury week, just ten years later. The same redoubtable batsman, facing the same lob-bowler, after an over or two succumbed to an easy ball. On being asked how it happened, 'Don't tell anyone,' he said, 'but as I was bringing down my bat to stop the ball my elbow stuck in my stomach!' It may be remarked that W. G., great in every way, successfully met that particular problem in his latter days, though it certainly waxed more and more difficult every summer.

One word more about bowling. The best boy bowler I can remember was Tommy Wakefield (Eton 1875); very fast with a powerful break-back. He could throw 115 yards, and on the excellent Maidenhead ground sent down shooters galore.

A bowler of original genius for one year only was Bailey (Eton 1874), the only one who made A. J. Webbe reflect for a moment, and who gained lustre by bowling 'Mike' clean in Upper Club. But the following year he was perfectly useless and had to be bowed off.

There is an interesting point or two about fielding over which some misapprehension exists. It is sometimes said that the schoolboy is at the best age for fielding. This is not so unless he is precociously grown and of the thick-set type so that he reaches

full command of his nether limbs before nineteen. But this is not common. Lanky boys may become fine fields at twenty-five, but not till then. The majority combine suppleness with compactness best at from twenty to twenty-five.

The most talked-of cover point in 1874 was Vernon Royle, and deservedly. The beauty of his action in running and brilliancy cowed the batsman and prevented many a run being thought of, the players being uneasily conscious of something uncanny on the off side. But to my mind he was not so effective as S. C. Newton (Cambridge 1876), who, nothing like so stylish, could stop the hardest hit without a qualm and, moreover, though not famous enough to cow the batsman, did better than that : he ran them out. He would stand ten yards farther out than usual and thereby, of course, covered many a hard drive. But the first man in would try a single for a gentle stroke towards cover, and Newton, a spare, compact figure of a man, always standing on his toes, told us in latter years, 'When I hear the fellow say "Come on" I feel like a spider with a fly.' He darted in, always picked up the ball clean, and shot it in unerringly to the wicket-keeper : the other batsman was often run out by quite three yards. This sort of trick gives fielding a rare interest, and ought to be much commoner.

I may be pardoned for mentioning two occasions when I got W. G. out. In a county match at Clifton he had got 80 against Middlesex and looked like staying there for life. He played a ball for a likely three between cover and mid-off, the latter being my post. I ran after it as hard as I could pelt, but just before reaching the ball, instead of clawing it in the usual way, I postponed stooping till I gathered my legs under me, so that I could grab the ball and turn and hurl it in in one motion. I knew that so perfect a judge of a run would try a third when he saw me stoop, but by dint of throwing very low and hard, without aiming or even seeing the wicket, I took him in, and Charlie Studd, who was bowling, caught the ball only three yards wide and had him out. Anyone who outwitted the Leviathan in his prime remembers it. (Hewitt, the Middlesex left-hand bowler, told us of collusion with short-leg who, at a prearranged moment, shifted his place after W. G. had looked round to see where he was, and got an easy catch from a short, rising ball.)

The other occasion was in 1878. I was fielding short slip, and F. J. Ford was bowling after a light shower had altered the pace of

the surface of the pitch. W. G. was a tiny bit late with a cut, and I caught him with the left hand, a very quick catch, and distinctly remember hearing the wicket-keeper say 'Well caught' before I knew what had happened! Many a batsman, by the way, has succumbed to the change of surface after light rain. The more correctly you were timing the ball on the dry, the more likely you are to be late when the turf is a little greasy.

A strong thrower from 'the country' can sometimes feign lethargy, but with the corner of his eye watch the batsman start his second run, pounce and hurl in with good effect. Not only does one batsman retire, but the rest miss many a run from panic. That sort of legitimate trick is a real consolation after an unsuccessful innings, and is a substantial help towards winning the match.

Cricket is a game which yields, I think, more comic incidents than any other. One occurred in the Long Vacation on the Trinity ground in 1876. (I should mention that the most sporting cricket I ever joined in was in the 'Long' of 1877, when we won match after match by fine keenness, plucky fielding, and a rare *esprit de corps*. We had no bowling, but pretended that we had, and that Charles Hardinge, the future Viceroy, who never bowled before or since, and my third-rate lobs, were formidable; so that the respect with which the other Colleges treated us was truly ludicrous. But we were not found out all the six weeks.) At the end of our innings one Wylde went in to bat, a sturdy youth, wholly untaught but prepared to 'have a go' before he fell. There was a very high wind blowing against the bowler, and the pace of the ball was difficult to judge. After an over, however, Wylde thought he must make a venture, and smote blindly with a horizontal bat at a well-pitched, straight ball. Something odd happened, and the ball impinged on the side of the bat and was sent quite straight up in the air for some sixty or seventy feet. The situation called for action on the part of the wicket-keeper, a stoutish young man in very tight flannels. He got himself ready to catch the descending ball and so get rid of Wylde: but it was necessary to gaze so long and earnestly up into the sky that he became oblivious of the state of things on earth. The wind, of course, blew the ball out of the vertical so that it promised to fall not on to the stumps but two or three yards nearer the middle of the pitch. The spectators one by one saw what must happen. At the last moment the conscientious X, with gloved hands extended, strode forward to get under the ball,

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stumbled noisily over the stumps, fell with a crash, and lay sprawling while the ball descended with a thump close to his pink, ingenuous face as he measured his length, wondering what he had done to deserve such an overthrow. We laughed, I remember, especially W. G. Mitchell, well known later to Rugbeians, till some of us felt a pain in the back of the neck !

There was something dramatic about the last innings I ever played, or ever shall play. While being engaged in giving addresses to Sunday-school teachers in a remote Suffolk village I was persuaded, though sixty-four years of age, to join in a curious match of two mixed elevens of boys and girls, pupils and teachers, in a meadow. I went in first and had to meet the deliveries of a tiny boy scout, aged twelve, who had never played cricket before. He bowled scout-wise, with his whole soul and body, but hardly managed to get the big, heavy ball to roll the whole twenty-two yards. His first ball pitched half-way, and I made as if to drive it on the long-hop forwards. But it was a 'hen-shooter,' and its second bound was just under the bat. Twice before I had been bowled by the same ball, once by G. F. Grace at Cambridge in 1876. It is always a short-pitched, bad ball, but very likely to be fatal. I retired for a 'blob,' and settled that it was time to 'hang up the shovel and the hoe.'

But the scout, I am told, went home much elated.

EDWARD LYTTELTON.

## ADVENTURES IN PRINTING HOUSE SQUARE.

BY BENNET COPPLESTONE (F. HARCOURT KITCHIN).

## VI. THE NORTHCILFFE INFILTRATION.

LORD NORTHCILFFE purchased a controlling interest in *The Times* in order to attain an eminence among newspaper proprietors to which he had long aspired, not so that he might achieve any definite purpose in its conduct. I, and many others, have sought to peer into his mind, to ascertain what he would be at in piling up newspapers and periodicals in bewildering variety, and we have all failed, because Lord Northcliffe did not know himself. He was certainly not impelled by a vulgar lust for money, though it happened incidentally that money flowed in upon him in a Niagara. He was a man singularly free from the vulgarities of newly won riches. I have not seen his house at St. Peter's in Thanet, but Bell told me that it was little more than a cottage, and was, in fact, the first home of his own which Lord Northcliffe had ever bought. He never owned what might be called a country estate. He leased a lovely Elizabethan house at Sutton Place, near Guildford, over which I have wandered with him as my guide, and I was struck by the simplicity and excellence of the taste displayed in all its appointments. His London home in my time was in St. James's Place, a charming small house overlooking the Green Park and standing on what was one of the quietest and most secluded sites in West London. If we set aside the dozen or more busts of the Emperor Napoleon—upon whose appearance in his later years Lord Northcliffe modelled himself—there was nothing freakish or ostentatious about St. James's Place. The thin, long-haired Napoleon of the Italian campaigns, with glittering hypnotic eyes, eyes which even in the portrait at Dalmeny strike an observer into awed silence, did not appear in Lord Northcliffe's collection. His own plumpness was more in harmony with the Napoleon of David's portraits.

Lord Northcliffe had no expensive tastes unless one can call an early passion for motor-cars an expensive taste in a man so extremely wealthy. He did not go in for horse-racing, or for yachts, or for gambling. He was a North-country Irishman of Puritan upbringing who never shed in prosperity his essential

puritanism. His reputation has always been free from private scandals, a circumstance in itself remarkable in one who achieved vast wealth at a very early age. The triviality, the commonness, of so many of his papers with their enormous circulations among the young men and women of Great Britain might make one groan, yet their triviality was the worst to be said of them; they were never licentious. Lord Northcliffe would pander to the public taste in most things, but he would never permit his papers to outrage his own engrained Puritan instincts. He was not, as some have declared, a genius without a soul, yet it was a curiously childish, undeveloped soul which was conjoined to his quite exceptional intellect. But though he had a soul of sorts, and was capable of great generosity, Lord Northcliffe was most certainly a Genius without a Purpose. He could establish the newspapers or periodicals which appealed to his own unfurnished mind, and make them pay as no man had ever made ephemeral literature pay before his time, yet when they had been established he did not in the least bit know what to do with them except to go on making them pay. That, I venture to think, was the tragedy of his life. He cared little for money, yet it was the one thing which he was supremely competent to make. And when at the summit of his career he bought *The Times*, and was filled with vague aspirations about making it the 'best' paper in the world, he failed because he did not know what was 'best,' and would not be taught by those who did. He had no standards. So that after the hot fit had passed, and the achievement of what was the 'best' eluded him, all he could then think of was how to make *The Times* pay. I can picture to myself his bewildered exasperation. He had money in superfluous measure already, he could not from his manner of living have spent a fifth part of his income, and yet all he could seek to achieve with his latest newspaper toy was to make more money. I do not know that he himself made much money out of *The Times*—though his estate did—he certainly made nothing else out of it.

As I watched Lord Northcliffe trying to understand *The Times* and its staff and its readers, and failing to comprehend what its purpose was in the view of those who loved and served it, it was borne in upon me the truth that no man can conduct a newspaper who has not himself a mind akin to that of the class of people to whom it is designed to appeal. There was this of true merit about the later Walters—who in other respects let down the poor

old *Times* so disastrously—that they did understand its purpose far more clearly than ever did Lord Northcliffe, their technical and intellectual superior in other ways. The English ideas of education as expressed in its public schools and universities may be absurd and effete—I have no desire to discuss them—nevertheless they are definite and are inspired by a definite purpose. *The Times* had always been a newspaper conducted by educated people for educated people—according to English standards. And no one can understand men and women educated by English standards unless he himself has been subjected in youth to the same educational influences. It does not alter a fact to condemn it as the outcome of a caste system ; rather it emphasises the fact, for nothing is so incomprehensible as a caste system to those who do not belong to it. *The Times* was a caste newspaper, and Lord Northcliffe did not belong to the caste. The most appropriate epithet which I can think of to apply to his mind is that which I have used already—it was unfurnished. He had never been educated in the English sense, he had never studied any branch of learning, even perfunctorily, he had never lived on equal terms of mutual criticism with those who had been educated on English lines. This may have been to his pecuniary advantage, but it was a fatal disability for one who sought to influence the conduct of so characteristic an English newspaper as *The Times*. Its ideals were to him utterly foreign.

I would sooner have had H. E. Hooper (of the 'Encyclopaedia Britannica') in possession of a controlling interest in *The Times* than I would have had Lord Northcliffe. For it was one of H. E. Hooper's great merits that he clearly realised his deficiencies. He was an American who revered English scholarship because he had none of it himself. In the eyes of Hooper the Editor of *The Times* was of the intellectual stature of a god. Just as H. E. Hooper never ventured to interfere with Chisholm's literary control over the 'Encyclopaedia Britannica,' so H. E. Hooper would never have ventured to interfere with the control of Buckle or Moberly Bell over the editorial staff and conduct of *The Times*. Hooper, intellectually small beside Lord Northcliffe, was in soul his superior. What Lord Northcliffe did not understand he disliked ; what Hooper did not understand he was willing to admire. Hooper's admiration for *The Times*, even of the 'nineties, was boundless. Kennedy Jones, whose influence over the changes made in *The Times* after the Northcliffe purchase counted for a

good deal, ranked somewhere between his Chief and H. E. Hooper. Kennedy Jones had some comprehension of the ethical purpose of *The Times* and a reluctant respect for it. When I hinted as delicately as I could that men who were accustomed to Harmsworth standards would find difficulty in catering for the readers of *The Times*, K. J. assented, yet expressed his confidence that they would succeed. 'All that we have to do,' said he, 'is to give the readers the best of everything—the best Law reports, the best Parliamentary reports, the best book and art and dramatic criticism that there is, the best City news, the best Foreign news, and so on. That is all.' 'Quite so,' I agreed, 'But who is going to tell you what is best?' I understood from K. J. that he was willing to be instructed by those who knew; the trouble with Lord Northcliffe was that he was not willing to be instructed by anybody. Because he was successful in running newspapers for readers with unfurnished minds like his own, he thought himself capable of running *The Times* for readers whose minds were furnished in a fashion, though Lord Northcliffe did not understand what that fashion was. He used to talk to me about the old readers of *The Times* as if they dwelt in a world which he had never explored. They bewildered and exasperated him.

For a short few months after the Northcliffe purchase had been completed Printing House Square was a happy home for the old staff. We had freed ourselves—or rather Moberly Bell had freed us—from the Walter constitution and the hereditary Walter printing business, and we stretched our limbs as slaves do who have cast off their fetters. We had entered upon a new and more oppressive slavery, but of that we were not yet fully conscious. Lord Northcliffe at the beginning bubbled with enthusiasm and amity. In his own view he was the chief among those who had the interests of *The Times* at heart, and he had conceived in his wayward fashion a genuine affection for Bell—and Bell for him. Lord Northcliffe never came to the Square—he never once entered its doors during my time—for he was full of apprehension lest his ownership should be advertised to the world; he stayed away and wrote letters to Bell, encouraging him to get on with the good work of making *The Times* a shining jewel among newspapers. He cried to Bell to spend money freely, and not to waste time in any more devices of penurious economy. And Bell, who had been 'squinch'ing—a useful portmanteau word—in every direction for years, had been squeezing and pinching to make the revenue

fit the expenditure, revelled for awhile in the delights of spending. He wrote to Northcliffe as often as Northcliffe wrote to him—they were now 'Dear Bell' and 'Dear N.' to one another. I, who saw this correspondence occasionally, used to chaff Bell about it, and ask after 'N.'s love letters.' When Lord Northcliffe was raised to the peerage he selected a title which would permit him to scrawl the Imperial Napoleonic initial at the foot of his letters. Bell, whose great interest was always in Foreign Correspondence, went the pace during that short hot fit of Lord Northcliffe's enthusiasm. He obeyed the injunction not to regard economy, perhaps the more eagerly because after those long years of squinching he was sick of economy. I, who had taken over office as Assistant Manager and financial watch dog, began to shiver when I saw the telegraph bills. I did some spending on my own account in those days, and helped to set up that Home News department of my dreams with its News Editor on duty by day and its reporters in early attendance to follow up events. So while Bell expanded the always generous Foreign News service I, in a much more modest way, paid regard to that department of Home News which had hitherto been so distressingly starved. Our Home News staff—a symbolical act—took over the room which had for many years harboured Godfrey Walter, manager of the now happily defunct printing business.

Another hobby of mine, the regular make-up of the pages of *The Times* was also put in hand at once, though it presented great difficulties. The Walter printing plant, with its Kastenbein type setters and elderly presses, still had to be used while the new plant was in course of being installed. Neither Bell nor I had anything directly to do with this installation, except to give all the help which we could to Lord Northcliffe's experts. A capable engineer, Mr. Bland, had charge and proceeded to equip the office with Monotype machines, and to put in hand the erection of a double-width Goss press. Mr. Bland was obliged, as the re-equipment proceeded, to 'axe' a large proportion of the Walter staff who became surplus to the new establishment. It was a most painful business for Mr. Bland and also for me. Old employees of the Walters, whose services had to be dispensed with, came to me with heart-breaking appeals for protection. I could do nothing, and would not have interfered with Mr Bland even if I had been equipped with the power and knowledge to do so effectually. Under rather a cold surface Mr. Bland hid from the world a tender,

sympathetic heart ; more than once I have seen the ice crack and the warm feelings of the man gush out. It was his task as the expert reorganiser of the costly Walter printing department, to cut the old staff to suit the new plant and he discharged his task as gently and fairly as could be. I have the more pleasure in writing this of Mr. Bland because the unhappy members of the Walter staff, who sought to play me off against him, inevitably contrasted my apparent gentleness with his apparent ruthlessness. In his place I should have done as he did, and I could not have done it more considerably than he did. Our relations were correct but not, I am afraid, cordial. He looked upon me as a competent editorial man who had been turned into an incompetent manager. On the whole I am inclined to agree with him. Never once since those fifteen months of management without power at Printing House Square came to an end have I regretted my return in 1909 to my true rôles as editor and author.

I never had it explained to me why Lord Northcliffe selected Monotype machines for setting *The Times* instead of the more familiar Linotypes used on his other papers, and by practically all daily newspapers. The Monotype is a beautiful and most flexible type-casting system, excellent for books and for printing which does not call for great speed in make-up. But unlike the Linotype which is a single-system and which casts type in slugs or lines, the Monotype is a double-system, which first punches holes in paper—something like pianola rolls—and afterwards translates these rolls into type on separate machines, casting type in separate letters and not in solid lines. A process which requires first the punching of paper rolls in a species of typewriter and then the casting of individual letters of type in other machines operated by those rolls of paper is inevitably slower than a single system such as the Linotype. It is also a more tricky job to collect up the produce of the Monotype casting machines, and to put it together into columns and pages for the paper, than it is to fling together the Linotype slugs. The really strenuous task of making up the paper was entrusted to Murray Brumwell, who strove gallantly against the inherent difficulties of the Monotype and aged visibly in the process. From the first he put in hand one most excellent and revolutionary reform—revolutionary that is, at Printing House Square, though common form at every other newspaper office which I have seen. This reform was an editorial planning of the paper each afternoon, so that all

departments knew precisely how much space was assigned to them, and the case-room knew exactly where every class of news was to be accommodated in the next morning's issue. One might as well set forth to build a house without a plan as to put together a newspaper without a plan. From the day when Brumwell took over his most arduous duties, *The Times* was at least planned as it never had been planned before. And the readers of *The Times* began to find their way about its massive pages as readily as they found their way about their own offices.

Though, as I have written, Lord Northcliffe never entered Printing House Square in my time, his Secretary used to visit us nearly every day, and we began to be conscious quite soon of that process of infiltration which had already been designed for our undoing. I should put, from my recollections, the duration of the Northcliffe hot fit of extravagant enthusiasm at about three months. That, I have since been informed, was a long spell of high temperature for a fit of Lord Northcliffe. After about three months the tone of 'N's love letters' to Moberly Bell began to become querulous. He who had urged Bell to leave the stony paths of economy and to revel in expenditure began to reveal a nasty disposition to inquire about costs.

Lord Northcliffe applied an admirable system of weekly cost sheets to all his papers, and he applied that system to us. We were required to show exactly what we were spending in all the multifarious ways in which money is spent in a newspaper office. We were also required to show in detail the sources and amount of our revenue. As a man who has had a strict financial training, I am wholly in favour of a sound costing system. Bell's vague estimates, on the backs of old envelopes of average costs per column and of revenue per column were worse than useless ; they were dangerously misleading. But I was unfortunately at the wrong end of the Northcliffe costing system and failed to enjoy it as, by my own principles, I ought to have done. For it was my melancholy job to analyse the costs and, to some extent, to accept responsibility for the costs ; it was Lord Northcliffe's much easier job to criticise the sheets which had been prepared. I could see, almost as easily as he could, how very valuable our sheets were to a critic who had passed through a hot fit and was beginning to get cold feet. We had obeyed, perhaps too literally, his injunctions to spend without ceasing, and the results when set forth upon ruled paper looked horrid.

On the editorial side Lord Northcliffe indulged himself at a very early stage in another of his pleasant devices. He was most tactful about it, yet I do not think that the Editor's Room was wholly mollified. Buckle and his Assistants were not without suspicion that what began in tact might end in rude interference. At an early hour of the morning it was Lord Northcliffe's habit to sit up in bed and to read all his papers, of which copies were specially brought to him. He would then call for secretaries and dictate to them the impressions made by his readings. He was extremely quick in his perceptions and in his judgments, some of which were admirably shrewd. Before very long these dictated impressions gained from perusals of *The Times* began to reach the Editor's Room by way of Moberly Bell. I used to read them in the course of transit. They were, as I have said, tactful performances, not a bit resembling those sour comments which the Chief sent to some of his other editors. Lord Northcliffe assured the Editor of *The Times* that he was not seeking to instruct him in his duties; all that he designed to do was to explain how each issue of *The Times* struck a serene and unbiased mind. He was not to be regarded as a proprietor who ordered but as a friend who suggested. Yet these daily outpourings of the serene unbiased mind of Lord Northcliffe—at six o'clock in the morning—were not soothing to the un-serene and perhaps the biased minds of those who had struggled overnight with all the problems of daily newspaper production. There is nothing quite so easy as to criticise a daily newspaper—next morning; there is nothing so difficult as to get the thing to come right on the night of preparation. Many of the commissions and omissions to which Lord Northcliffe directed the Editor's attention were fully realised by the Editor himself hours before Lord Northcliffe awoke, sat up in bed, and proceeded to dictate impressions. On the other hand there were in those daily notes really valuable suggestions of which any editor would gladly avail himself—for Lord Northcliffe was the most keen-sighted journalist of his day in the valuation of 'News.' The mistake made by Lord Northcliffe was not in the substance of his daily notes so much as in the manner of their communication. If he had wished—as I am sure that he did—discreetly to influence the ways of the Editor's Room rather than to interpose as the Proprietor Who Must Be Obeyed, there ought not to have been any dictation of memoranda to secretaries and any sending of these serene unbiased comments

to Printing House Square. He ought now and then to have conferred personally with the Editor and Capper and Richmond, to have canvassed their ideas and to have hinted his own, to have done everything which he sought to do in person and not in type-script. By his method he succeeded in rattling the Editor's Room without gaining its confidence. And so on the Management side. He succeeded, after the hot fit had passed, in rattling Bell and in rattling me much more than he guided us in the direction of his wishes. We all, in a sentence, began to find our new Chief Proprietor an oppressive nuisance. It was not going to be easy 'to keep "Him" in order.' Had he realised clearly what he wanted, and pursued a consistent policy, we could have shaped our course in harmony with his desires. But he passed from hot fit to cold fit, from enthusiasm to grumbling, and was consistent only in his inconsistency. But yet all the while there were qualities in him which were singularly attractive.

I saw a good deal of Lord Northcliffe in the summer of 1908. He used to send for me and talk to me in the frankest and most indiscreet fashion imaginable. What struck me most was his apparently complete disregard for reticence concerning the capacities and characters of his associates and of those who worked for him. My first meeting with him stands out vividly in my recollections. I spent the whole of a brilliant hot day with him alone at Sutton Place and he talked continually for hours on end. He ranged over a multitude of subjects and persons—his brothers, associates like Kennedy Jones, his papers and their editors, Moberly Bell, the Walters, Buckle, the German Peril, his own responsibilities as the Chief Proprietor of *The Times*, his services to British journalism, and his anxieties about what would happen to *The Times* when he was no more. I was immensely attracted by him and immensely interested in his personality. He seemed at once to be so great and to be so small. He expressed the profound conviction that the true founder of *The Times* was the Second John Walter, and its greatest editor Thomas Barnes, 1816–1841. He allowed merit in Delane, yet put him a long way below Barnes. The now almost forgotten John Walter the Second and Thomas Barnes were, according to Lord Northcliffe, the only men in the history of *The Times* who could bear comparison with himself. He declared his intention to repeat in the early twentieth century their triumphs of the early nineteenth. When I inquired how he was going to set about it he became vaguely confident. He

had certain clear ideas about circulation and advertisements—which he understood as well as any man living—but when I discussed with him editorial policy he went no further than a declaration that he was going to make *The Times* the ‘best paper in the world.’ When I hinted that his methods might repel old readers, he scoffed and said that he would fill their places with multitudes of new ones. He appeared to take no interest in a comparatively small circulation of educated readers; he aspired to hundreds of thousands. In all this no purpose could be discerned except the crude purpose of somehow piling up readers and advertisements. Money was nothing to him, he said—which was quite true—he was a ‘colossally rich man,’ it mattered little to him whether *The Times* paid its way or not, and then—with glaring inconsistency—he hauled out one of those melancholy sheets of weekly revenue and costs, catechised me severely upon its details, and wanted to know exactly how expenses at Printing House Square could be instantly cut down. This was little more than three months after he had been urging Moberly Bell to spend without ceasing, and to give the Editor’s Room its head in the matter of home and foreign correspondents. Lord Northcliffe had an impressive grasp of detail and, I am afraid, I came rather badly out of his criticism of the cost sheets. He revealed a disposition to hold me responsible for them, and I dismally saw myself cast for the part of the fragile nut between the steam-hammer of Lord Northcliffe and the anvil of Moberly Bell. Though Moberly Bell was Managing Director, and I was a nobody, Lord Northcliffe then and there impulsively invested me with supreme authority to cut expenses to the bone. ‘Go ahead at once,’ he commanded. ‘Never mind Bell.’ He really meant what he said, for it became apparent later that he purposed to apply a control over Printing House Square very much like that which the British Government enforced for many years in Egypt. Alongside the Egyptian Ministers were placed British Advisers who were charged with the duty of keeping the Ministers under tactful direction. But if on the Egyptian model, Lord Northcliffe really expected me to play the ludicrous part of ‘Adviser’ in the Northcliffe interests, to Moberly Bell, the Managing Director, I am afraid that he was disappointed. Perhaps this is why later on he took the characteristic Northcliffe steps to squeeze me out. He had assented to my appointment as Assistant Manager to please Moberly Bell, though I was, from the first, in his way. What he wanted was an Assistant

Manager appointed from among his own adherents who would represent directly the Northcliffe interests and the Northcliffe point of view. It was quite reasonable that the new proprietors should be represented in this manner, and had Lord Northcliffe told me his views at the beginning I should have stepped aside at once and remained in my old place on the editorial side. His plan of infiltration required the formation of a Northcliffe Party in Printing House Square, and the key position was the one which I held at Moberly Bell's side. I bear him no malice for squeezing me out—almost any other purchaser who wanted to exercise detailed control would have taken the same course—though it was put through in a fashion which not even the personal charm of Reginald Nicholson, my supplanter, could make agreeable.

Lord Northcliffe expressed anxiety about the future of *The Times* in the event of his own death. He explained to me that he had no direct heirs, and even if he had, that he did not believe in hereditary businesses. New blood needed to be brought in at each generation to keep *The Times* alive and active. Thereupon, with the inconsistency which was in him so amazing and so entertaining, he solemnly propounded a scheme for turning *The Times* into a National Trust and vesting the controlling shares in the Trustees of the British Museum! He certainly expressed some doubts whether the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Speaker, and the other exalted Trustees would accept responsibility for a daily newspaper, even for *The Times*, yet he did not pause to imagine to himself the fate which would overtake *The Times* should they unfortunately consent. A daily newspaper conducted by the Trustees of the British Museum, on stern official lines, would be about as attractive as the *London Gazette*. Lord Northcliffe discussed this fantastic scheme for quite a long time and seemed to be quite pleased with it. He said that he was prepared to endow the *National Trust pretty handsomely*. *It would have needed to be propped by a fortune as great as his to have kept it from collapsing under its own dead weight.*

I would not condemn my worst enemy to the life which I led for the next twelve months during which Lord Northcliffe's cold fit kept me busy trying to keep pace with his daily fall in temperature. He took to writing letters to me, ordering me, *over Bell's head, to do this and that in reduction of expenses*. All his information concerning *The Times* was at second hand, *for he did not himself come to the office. More than once the*

pressure to which I was subjected, and my efforts to reconcile direct orders from the Chief Proprietor with my subordination to Moberly Bell, the Managing Director, brought me into collision with Bell. Had Bell not subdued his fiery temper in remembrance of our long friendship, a grievous breach must have opened between us. He was himself being harried continually, and was fighting in his own dauntless fashion to keep, at any rate, Lord Northcliffe's restless fingers off the editorial staff. Bell submitted to several dismissals of old servants on the management side—chiefly in the advertisement office—which I was directly instructed to put through. It was a filthy job ; I shall carry the white faces of those stricken men with me to my grave—but one day he exploded, and in bitterness of heart reproached me with desertion. ‘I have fought with Northcliffe for your life,’ said he, ‘and now you also are siding with him against me.’ I cried out that this was the last unkindest cut of all and offered my instant resignation. Bell softened at once, withdrew the horrid charge, and we stood for awhile miserably unveiling our tortured souls to one another. My plight, he agreed, was worse than his own, for he had a legal status and a definite contract of service with the new Company, while I had no status, no authority, nothing. When I was first appointed Assistant Manager, I busied myself in preparing plans for the benefit of *The Times*, and assumed authority for carrying some of them out, but Lord Northcliffe’s cold fit rapidly chilled my enthusiasms. I had become nothing more useful than a bit of driftwood flung to and fro by the waves of Lord Northcliffe’s changeful humour. This man, though he was capable of great kindnesses, could torture those who served him without giving a thought to the pain which they suffered. He was, to me, like a boy pulling the legs off flies.

‘I have a five years’ contract as Managing Director,’ said Bell when—had we been of Latin blood—we had reached the stage of weeping upon one another’s hairy necks, ‘don’t leave me before you are driven to it. I will stand by you, but don’t carry on any backstair correspondence with Northcliffe.’

‘How can I help ? ’ I wailed. ‘His Secretary is in and out of my room every day, and whenever I kick —’s verbal instructions are reinforced by letters from his Chief. The bombardment never stops.’

Bell shrugged his shoulders and laughed ruefully. The sense of humour in both of us was getting overstrained and losing resilience

We had begun by laughing at 'Him' and rather enjoying his ways ; 'He' had come to making us laugh, as they say in Devon, 'on the other side of our faces.' Bell and I agreed to stick together, to exchange full confidences, and to make the best of what for the senior members of the old *Times* staff was becoming a very bad job. I am happy to remember that afterwards, to the day of our parting, no further shadow arose between Bell and me. It was significant that our old joyous personal battles had ceased. They had been great fun, but we had passed out of the mood for sham fights. They were too many real ones to be fought. Bell, the splendid old warrior, was ageing and the steel of his spirit was losing its temper. The valves of his fleshy heart were giving warnings of trouble, and as his crippled feet grew weaker and more full of pain, his big body tended to increase in bulk. In the physical as in the moral sense the year 1908 marked the crisis of his life.

As Moberly Bell's health failed him and his mental worries increased in severity, he softened in his attitude towards life and towards the staff whom in the past he had ruled with severity. His greatest anxiety now was for their welfare. It gratified him very much to take over the private house of the Walters in the Square and transform it into a staff club. A lady—one of four sisters with a famous name, who had been born and bred in my own Devonshire village and whom I had known in their girlhood—was so kind as to help us, and to teach us how to run our new club. She gave us an excellent send-off, and I am told that the club still flourishes. In an enterprise of this kind Lord Northcliffe was most helpful and sympathetic. In my early years of night duty we used to bring up sandwiches to keep us going throughout the long hours of duty ; now the staff were able to dine in comfort at hours convenient to the service of the paper at prices calculated to cover the bare cost. Bell and I lunched in the club nearly every day and made it our business to see that it gave of the best at the lowest possible charges. Bell had always been accessible, but he was immensely feared ; now in his mellow age he was feared no longer. All the members of the club were one happy family, official rank counted for nothing ; our mess in Printing House Square, with its friendly chaff and its disrespect for the wise and eminent, resembled nothing in London so much as the billiard-room of the Savile Club after lunch or after dinner. Bell, the Managing Director, was just one of us, and my friends—who had never before had an opportunity to learn and appreciate his human

qualities—would wonder why they had been accustomed to look upon the ‘Manager’ as a fearsome beast. From the newly won love of the staff, for whose sake he had brought in Lord Northcliffe, Bell drew much solace in those closing days of his troubles and anxieties. The more nearly he drew towards us the keener became his apprehensions of what might be in store for us when his own five years of high office should come to an end. He had then no reason to apprehend that death would interpose after precisely three years.

When I look back now upon that most unhappy period in my life it seems to me that most of the unhappiness sprang from Lord Northcliffe’s unwillingness or inability to give us of his full confidence. He had become too much of the autocrat, and we of the Management and Editorial sides came of a stiff-necked English class which does not bend meekly before an autocrat. We all recognised the genius of the man and were most anxious to work in harmony with him, but we refused to be bullied by any man living. Had not Lord Northcliffe, by too early a success in his enterprises and by too complete a withdrawal from the invaluable benefits of everyday criticism, grown into a Napoleonic Chief Who Must Be Obeyed, he might have achieved durable work in Fleet Street and Printing House Square. He broke upon the world of newspapers like a tempest, for a while he swept all before him—and thirty years after his death he will be as completely forgotten as have been other tempests. Already within two years of his physical end his name is passing out of recollection.

From Moberly Bell and Buckle downwards we were all most anxious to help Lord Northcliffe in his difficult task of restoring the financial and moral fortunes of *The Times*. We never sought to obstruct him. On the side which was supremely his *métier*: the production, distribution, and advertising departments of a daily newspaper, we fully recognised that, in comparison with his professional competence, we were but fumbling amateurs. Yet even on the business side, in which Bell and I welcomed all the help and guidance which he could give us, Lord Northcliffe did not take us into his confidence. And so it came about that his orders harried without enlightening us. We could not see any purpose in his waywardness.

Let me give two examples. Lord Northcliffe was eager, and naturally eager, to improve the revenue of *The Times* from advertisements. He put in a brilliant young advertisement manager

and urged me to give him all possible support—which I gladly did. A wise Chief Proprietor would then have left us alone while holding us personally responsible for the results. But Lord Northcliffe would butt in—there is no other word—and exasperate us. One of the most valuable advertising supporters of *The Times* was a leading firm of brandy importers who had run a campaign in the columns of *The Times* before the dawn of the Northcliffe era with results in business which appeared to be satisfactory. At any rate this firm wished to continue its advertising, and one day a full-page illustrated advertisement was submitted to me and accepted. It may not have been an artistic production, consisting as it did chiefly of a long vista of barrels—presumably filled with Three Star brandy. The page appeared in our issue—and Lord Northcliffe came down upon me in furious wrath. Never he declared had *The Times* been so utterly disgraced as by the acceptance of this page of barrels. It was in vain that I pointed out the previous acceptance of numberless pages from the same firm in which barrels had prominently figured, and quoted my instructions to increase the advertisement revenue by legitimate means. Perhaps, rather injudiciously, I added that we ‘wanted money badly.’ ‘Your excuse,’ flashed back Lord Northcliffe, ‘is that of a burglar or embezzler. Never take an advertisement because you want money.’ He then proceeded to declare that he did not like brandy and that, judging by the advertisements, the readers of *The Times* drank too much brandy already.

Then when Selfridge’s began its dazzling career in Oxford Street with full-page advertisements in all the papers, a fine drawing by Bernard Partridge was sent in to us with instructions that it should appear upon a certain definite date. The idea of Mr. Selfridge was to make a great simultaneous splash in the Press. We had an excellent block made of the drawing and sent a pull to Lord Northcliffe, thinking that he would be pleased with it. Not a bit! He roared disapproval and ordered us to refuse it. To this day I cannot conceive why; it was an admirable and most artistic design, worthy of its producer. The advertisement manager and I both tackled Lord Northcliffe without moving him by a hair’s breadth, and *The Times* was the only daily paper in London which did not have a full-page advertisement of the opening of the Selfridge Store. Until then I had done all I knew to please him; from that moment I abandoned the task as quite beyond my poor capacities.

Kennedy Jones was much easier to get on with. He frequently

visited us at Printing House Square, chiefly in connexion with the installation and operation of the new printing plant. I liked 'K. J.' and so did Moberly Bell. His attitude was perhaps that of an accomplished schoolmaster instructing two rather stupid children—as we may have appeared in his eyes—yet he was always friendly and considerate towards our stupidity and our ignorance. Of course we were ignorant upon the printing side which, hitherto, had been the preserve of the Walters. 'K. J.' never bullied me for a reason which appeared one day. I said in relation to some printing details : 'All this is outside my knowledge.' 'Of course,' replied he, 'you know nothing about it and there is no reason why you should. You are an editorial man and out of your native element.' It was truly and kindly said. I was out of my element. Later on, during my seven years in Glasgow, I taught myself quite a lot about printing and newspaper management, but in 1908-09 I was a mere beginner in a branch of newspaper production which was alien to my former experience. Still if 'K. J.' had been Chief Proprietor instead of Lord Northcliffe, I should have quickly learned.

The culminating day of the new printing plant was May 23, 1909, when for the first time we proposed to print *The Times* on the huge Goss Press which had been installed by Mr. Bland in that lofty machine-room at the Square which, from its timbered roof, we called 'The Cathedral.' The double-width Goss, with its electrical controls, extended right across the far end of 'The Cathedral,' and may, for all that I know, stand there still. It was a very fine machine, which at full running flung out folded and cut copies as fast as snowflakes in a winter storm. On May 24 we were to publish an 'Empire Supplement,' the first of those colossal masses of articles and advertisements with which the name of *The Times* became associated. The advance orders for this Supplement were enormous, in comparison with the ordinary sale of the paper, and it was, of course, made up and printed in advance of the date of publication. Mr. Bland, the expert official printer, could not keep pace with the orders, so that we had to ration newsagents and give them only a proportion of what they wanted to take.

Well, the 'Empire Supplement' was printed on the Goss and the work turned out, both letterpress and pictures, won the admiration of 'K. J.' himself. He turned over the broad pages—there were forty-eight of them—in Moberly Bell's room and deservedly congratulated Mr. Bland. 'But,' he added, turning towards Bell

and me, 'Is it not all rather inhuman? You can't expect anybody to read all that.' I don't think that we bothered about people reading 'all that' so long as they ordered it in larger quantities than we could supply. So far success, but it is always the unexpected that happens. On the night of the 23rd we went to press an hour earlier than usual so as to allow time for printing the big first edition of *The Times* which had to accompany the 'Empire Supplement' into the outer world. Then, as the occasion was an historic one in the Square, Bell and I went down to 'The Cathedral' to see the paper printed for the first time on the great mammoth of a Goss. The single-width Hoe machines of the Walter era, which were sprinkled about the room, looked like battered tramps in the company of a stately liner. Their day had passed, though that night was to prove that it was not yet quite over.

I shall never forget that evening with its exasperation, its thrills, and its gusts of sardonic humour. The Fates were in a mood for sport and let us know it quickly. We arrived, Bell and I, when it had been announced to us that the Goss stood ready clothed with plates and about to be run. It was electrically driven. Upstairs an emergency staff of packers waited besides vast piles of the 'Empire Supplement' to wed the Supplement to *The Times* and to convey both together to the Post Office vans. Outside the main publishing office the wagons of the wholesale agents were already assembling. The edition which was about to be printed far exceeded in quantity, though supplies had been rationed, any issue during my years at the Square, and the parcels for dispatch would in volume be four or five times the weight of those containing an ordinary issue. Mr. Bland was present to superintend the proceedings in 'The Cathedral'; his pale face and glowing eyes showed that the occasion had stirred the emotions even of a professional engineer. He told us that everything was ready and Bell gave the word to start. We had seen the Goss running before—it had printed the 'Empire Supplement'—and we expected that the touch of a finger on an electric switch would be instantly followed by the low rumble, rising to an even roar, which was the cry of the Goss in action. But silence lay thickly about our ears. We could see the electricians conferring with Bland and shaking their heads. Something untoward had happened, I know not what—and the Goss would not move. Time went on. The experts overhauled wires and controls, they made several mysterious tests, now and then there would come a blue flash from the big switches—

yet nothing disturbed the motionless placidity of the imperturbable Goss. It stood there, fully clothed with a double set of plates, massively immovable.

Time fled all too quickly. Messengers hurried in from my emergency packing staff and from the publishing office; the Post Office and the newsagents were clamouring for supplies and we were warned that the margin of time granted to us by the early going to press was slipping fast away. Presently we should start in vain, for the special newspaper trains would have departed without *The Times*. Then that happened for which the old Hoes had been sardonically waiting. Plates were stripped off the intractable Goss, other plates were rushed down the slide from the foundry, two Hoe machines were hastily clothed and summoned to save the paper which in the past they had served faithfully to the limit of their capacities. And nobly forgiving they responded instantly. They went off with a clatter which outclattered anything which I have heard in a newspaper machine-room. They seemed to my over-strained, nervous ears to be making ten times more than their customary row. They howled at us and chucked out copies exuberantly in the detached portions—the Inner and Outer Sheets—of which we had, in our Goss pride, thought to have seen the very last. Somehow the issue was printed and got away; it was a frightful scramble, yet the packers, working with savage desperate energy, got through and the trains were caught. It was the nearest thing that ever happened—a very close run thing, as Wellington said of the Battle of Waterloo. And then at the end, as we turned to seek our waiting cars and go home to bed, Bell spoke:

'Couldn't you hear the old Hoes chuckling?' asked he. That was the word, the *mot juste*, chuckling. And they had earned the right to chuckle themselves off their bedplates as soon as their right loyal task of saving *The Times* had been discharged.

When Moberly Bell drew up the Editorial Charter of *The Times*, and arranged with Lord Northcliffe, before his own nominal purchase of the copyright was effected, that the Board should consist of members of *The Times* staff, he was intent upon continuity after purchase. He could never have anticipated that the Northcliffe infiltration would proceed so rapidly as it did, and that the Old Guard would have all gone, by death or retirement, in little more than four years. Bell's own contract as Managing Director was for five years; his death after three years removed the most powerful and most vigilant of all the old watch dogs.

My own resignation was the first clean break with the past. My position at Bell's right hand was the tactical key which opened Printing House Square to Lord Northcliffe once it had been occupied by one of his own officers. I could not fail to see that the Chief Proprietor wished me gone, and was only restrained by Bell's support of me from speeding my going. It was in the spring of 1909 that he began to put in operation the characteristic strategy known as 'squeezing out.' He put in one of his former secretaries, a personally charming man named Reginald Nicholson, as a plain hint that my continued presence was unwelcome. It was done under a veil of polite camouflage to which neither I, nor Bell on my behalf, could take effective objection. Nicholson came, as Lord Northcliffe intimated to me, to represent his policy and wishes and 'to assist me in my work.' Nicholson was given no official position at that time. He was an 'Adviser' on the Egyptian model created by Lord Cromer. I should have politely withdrawn forthwith had not my own little niche—the 'Financial and Commercial Supplement' and my private connexion in the City—been left as a legacy by me to my late pupil and assistant, 'Jack' Maughan. I could not, and would not if I could, have displaced Maughan from well-deserved promotion because I wanted his job for myself. It was a job of my creation, it is true, yet one which I had resigned willingly to him a year before. So before I packed my traps up and bade Printing House Square farewell, I had to wait for a few months, in the spirit of Mr. Micawber, for something suitable to turn up. Had I chosen to bargain with Lord Northcliffe I expect that he would have paid me a substantial sum to make way for his representative. It was not in my view an occasion for bargaining. Lord Northcliffe had a perfect right to be represented directly at Printing House Square instead of indirectly, and I did not question then, and do not now, the propriety of his desire for my departure. I should certainly have preferred the straight course of asking me to resign than the crooked device which he saw fit to adopt. I am grateful to him for sending me Nicholson, with whom I became most friendly. If I had to play the part of Esau I could not have been assigned a kindlier or more honourable Jacob. Nicholson supplanted me with infinite tact and patience, and I hope that he will read this expression of my gratitude. In many ways my life became much more happy after his arrival. I was no longer the butt and whipping-boy of the Chief Proprietor, and I could do as little real work as I pleased. I believe that had I gone on for years attending the office in the nominal capacity

of Assistant Manager, doing no work, and 'drawing my pay reg'lar,' Lord Northcliffe would not have troubled to inquire what I did for my money.

The end to my embarrassments came quickly and completely. The directors of the company which owned the *Glasgow Herald* asked Moberly Bell and Buckle to recommend an Editor. I knew about this for some weeks before I thought of myself as Editor of a Scottish newspaper. Then one day I walked into Bell's room. 'I wish that I could find a really good man for the *Glasgow Herald*', said he. 'The offer to — has fallen through.' Then in a flash of genius, I exclaimed: 'Why not recommend me!' Bell stared at me blankly. 'It seems incredible,' he murmured, 'that I never once thought of you. Why you are the very man; your experience of commercial journalism will be just what the *Herald* people want.'

Bell wired at once to Scotland, within a few days one director came down and saw me, within a few more days the whole Board came down—except one member who was in Canada—and I was appointed. It was arranged that I should take up office in Glasgow on September 1. This was in June.

So my family and I packed up our traps and turned our faces to the North. Had I known how very different Scotland is from England, how like a foreign city Glasgow would be to the Londoner, I could not have entered upon my new job with the confident courage which I showed. Luckily I did not know, and by the time that I had learned familiarity with it, Glasgow had given me a newer and more durable courage. Glasgow welcomed me with boundless hospitality, and admitted me with sublime disregard of consequences to the brotherhood of Scotland. My seven years' work in Glasgow made of me a Scotsman in Scotland and an Englishman in London, and so I remain to this day. My wife and I loved the dear dirty friendly Glasgow, and we love it still. I might have been to this day Editor of the *Glasgow Herald* if my daughter had not terrified me by developing a Glasgow accent!

My last official experience of Moberly Bell was exactly characteristic of him. Kennedy Jones, on behalf of the proprietors of *The Times*, had made me a grant of three months' pay to cover the costs of my cleaning-up and move. I reckoned that if I left Printing House Square at the end of July, and took the month of August as the holiday due to me, that my gratuitous three months' pay would date from the end of August and not from the end of July. I explained this to Bell. He grinned nastily, and looked

exactly like the Moberly Bell who used to refuse me increases of my salary in the days of my apprenticeship. 'No, you don't,' said he. 'I love you, my dear fellow, and I am most sorry to lose you, but you can't come over me like that. If you leave in July your three months' pay will date from July.' I could have scored off the economical Bell by staying south during August and deferring my resignation until the close of that month, but this course would have been highly inconvenient. I had to get in touch with my new surroundings at the earliest moment. So I definitely left at the end of July and Moberly Bell saved just £125. 'I would have done the same had you been my son,' said he, and I fully believed him. As trustee for *The Times* he was a remorseless Brutus. I could have easily got the money out of 'K. J.', but that would have been to have spoiled the rich flavour of my last clash with Bell.

\* \* \*

I will not dwell upon events of which I have no personal knowledge. It is enough to say that the closing years of Bell's life were not happy ones, though, by a merciful dispensation, the actual termination of his career was peaceful and undimmed by foreboding. He had been much distressed at the failure of his Editorial Charter—of which I have told—to protect the Editor from increasing pressure, but about two weeks before his death these distresses left him. He became cheerful and confident, and his old ebullient self seemed to take on a new lease of life. On the day of his death—April 5, 1911, three days before his sixty-fourth birthday—he went as usual to his office and sat down to write letters with his own hand as he loved to write them. Then, in an instant, the weakened valves of his heart ceased to work and he fell dead from his chair. It was not a case of faintness passing into death for want of instant medical attention. He was dead when he fell, and nothing could have availed had the whole College of Physicians been present.

Lord Northcliffe, who was abroad, acted with the promptness and thoughtful kindness which characterised him at his best. He took by cable all those measures which do soften even the worst of blows and leave behind them grateful recollections. I am sure that he loved 'old Bell' as he used to call him to me, and realised then as always how masterly an associate Bell had proved himself to be in that crisis of 1908 which brought to Lord Northcliffe his heart's desire.

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### LITERARY ACROSTICS.

THE Editor of THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE offers prizes to the value of at least £3 to the most successful solvers of this series of four Literary Acrostics. There will also be consolation prizes, two or more in number: the winners of these will be entitled to choose books to the value of £1 from Mr. Murray's catalogue. And, further, every month a similar prize of books will be awarded to the sender of the correct solution that is opened first.

#### DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 18.

(*The Second of the Series.*)

‘ ‘Fore God I am no coward ;

But I cannot meet them here, for my ships are out of gear,  
And the half my men are sick. I must fly, but follow  
quick.’

1. ‘ A lie which is half a —— is ever the blackest of lies.’
2. ‘ Storm’d at with shot and shell,  
While horse and —— fell.’
3. ‘ Heaven flash’d a sudden jubilant ray,  
And down we swept and charged and ——.’
4. ‘ I am aweary, aweary,  
I would that I were dead.’
5. ‘ I row’d across  
And took it, and have worn it, like a king :  
And, wheresoever I am sung or told  
In aftertime, this also shall be known.’
6. ‘ A red-cross knight for ever kneel’d  
To a lady in his ——.’

*Acrostic No. 18 is taken entirely from Tennyson.*

#### RULES.

1. Only one answer may be sent to each light.
2. Every correct light and upright will score one point.
3. With his answer every solver must send the coupon that is printed above ‘ Book Notes ’ on a later page.

## LITERARY ACROSTICS.

4. At the foot of his answer every solver must write his pseudonym (consisting of one word), and nothing else. His name and address should be written at the back.

5. Solvers must on no account write either the quotations or the references on the same paper as their answers. It is not necessary, or even desirable, to send them at all.

6. Solvers who write a second letter, to correct a previous answer, must send the complete solution as they wish it, and not merely state the desired alteration.

7. Answers to Acrostic No. 18 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE, 50A Albemarle Street, London, W. 1, and must arrive not later than August 20.

PROEM : Gray, *Elegy*.

## LIGHTS :

## ANSWER TO NO. 17.

|    |   |      |   |
|----|---|------|---|
| 1. | T | hic  | K |
| 2. | O | cea  | N |
| 3. | L | ittl | E |
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| 5. | S | ou   | L |

1. Cowper, *John Gilpin*.
2. Coleridge, *The Ancient Mariner*, ii.
3. Goldsmith, *The Vicar of Wakefield*, ch. 8.
4. Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, v., 1.
5. Pope, *Imitations of Horace, Satires*, ii., 1.

Acrostic No. 16 ('Phantom Delight'): Only one competitor answered the whole acrostic; the chief crux was 'Tenting,' which defeated all but three solvers, and the sixth light was the only one that every one considered easy.

Of the 115 answers received, 1 was correct throughout, 6 failed in one light, 8 failed in two, 12 failed in three, 85 failed in more than three lights, 2 were unsigned, and I did not observe the rule about references.

'Wynell,' who sent the only correct answer, takes the prize awarded to the sender of the first opened correct solution. Mr. E. W. M. Lloyd, Hartford House, Hartley Wintney, Hants, is entitled to choose books to the value of £1 from Mr. Murray's catalogue.

## RESULT OF THE FOURTH SERIES.

Full marks for the series was 33, and the leading competitors are: Wynell, 33; Amy, Belvoir, Edumis, and Lass, 32. Wynell took a prize in the third series, and is now debarred from a further one; the other four must, consequently, share the prizes. Each of them will receive a cheque for £1, and may also choose books from Mr. Murray's catalogue to the value of £1. They must be considered ineligible for prizes in the fifth series, now running, unless one of them is the only solver who sends a correct answer to an acrostic, when he would take the monthly prize of books.

The winners are: Amy, Mrs. A. E. Hornidge, Faynfield, Tyrrellspass, Co. Westmeath, Ireland; Belvoir, Miss Baxter, 85 Kingsmead Road, Streatham Hill, S.W. 2; Edumis, Mr. S. B. Relton, Crowthorne, Berks; Lass, Mrs. Steedman, Steventon Rectory, Basingstoke.

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